

STUDIES IN ISLAM SERIES

ISLAM AND HUMANITY'S NEED OF IT

By

MUHAMMAD YOUSSEF MOUSSA

MINISTRY OF WAQFS
SUPREME COUNCIL
FOR ISLAMIC AFFAIRS
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The translation of the Qurânic verses that is cited here are a mere interpretation of the meaning.

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INTRODUCTION TO THE SECOND EDITION

The first edition of this book appeared in August 1959 and its 5000 copies were sold out in a few months! This was an indication that I had been granted divine aid in writing it and that the book had appeared when it was really needed.

Connected with this book is a strange story, which I did not want to relate in the introduction to the first edition. But I feel that it is now time to tell it, as a lesson to those who understand.

Since I went to France in 1954 to specialize in the study of philosophy at the Faculty of Arts at Paris University, I have been insisting on the necessity of writing a book on Islam that would present all aspects of it — its doctrine, legislation, ethics, morals, perfect institutions, and in fact, all that Islam brought us to be adopted by society, nation and humanity at large to achieve peace, prosperity and happiness for the whole world. I also called for the translation of that book — after its completion — into the widely spoken languages, so that it could be used as an effective instrument in acquainting the Westerners with Islam, as I had noticed during my stay in their countries that they knew hardly anything about this religion.

For this purpose, I approached some of the former Rectors of Al Azhar as well as some of the responsible officials in certain government departments. But none of those

seemed to have been inspired by divine clarity to put my proposal into execution. It even seemed that those people did not read the applications I had submitted to them to that effect !

Having lost all hope of getting any help from those people, I said to myself as others said to me : " Why should I not write the book myself, so that by writing it — according to my own means — I could carry out my duty to propagate Islam, the duty which is incumbent upon every Muslim, and then leave the question of the book's translation and communication to the Western world until God decreed what He willed about it. ? " And that was what really happened, for I did beseech God's help and wrote the book, which is placed here before my readers.

The result was such more than I had ever expected or hoped. Demand for the book from Arab and Muslim countries was so great that the first edition, of which thousands of copies had been printed, was out of print in a few months. Then God willed that the book be translated to Western languages, which was the sacred objective I had for long years been yearning for.

Moreover, I came to know a few days ago that an Indian Muslim scholar had begun the translation of the book into Urdu, the language spoken by scores of millions of Indians. One part of the book has already appeared in that language in an Indian magazine of which I have received a copy. When the translation of the book into Urdu is complete, it will come out in book through the goodness of the Almighty God.

God willing, the writer hopes to follow this book with others tackling the same subject, namely the exposition of

Islam from all its sides, in a correct and scientific way, with a view of overcoming all the arguments giving excuses to people to shun it or disregard some of the tenets, laws and moral values revealed through the last of all the divine Apostles.

I beseech God to make the book useful and favourable to the balance of its writer at the Last Judgement, when one soul shall be powerless for another soul and when all sovereignty shall be with God.

Muhammad Youssef Moussa

PREFACE

By the well-known scholar, our brother Professor Abul Hassan Ali Al Husny Al Nadawy, who is an eminent Indian scholar and advocate of Islam, Chairman of the Islamic Academy in Lucknow, India, and member of the Arab Academy in Damascus.

IN THE NAME OF ALLAH, THE BENEFICENT, THE MERCIFUL

The desire to study and understand Islam as a doctrine, law and system has grown and acquired universality among modern cultured Muslims and broadminded non-Muslims. All of them have taken the trouble to read small or medium sized books beautifully and clearly expounding Islam without involving any complication or unnecessary lengthy details. Such books summarize the Islamic culture in a modern style precisely and reliably.

A number of scholars have taken pains to write such books in different languages for the cultured Muslim youths who direfully need them as well as for the non-Muslims whose time and circumstances do not help them to study Islam extensively and intensively.

Of these books, I remember the "Introduction To Islam", which was recently written by an Indian Muslim scholar.

Then came "Islam and Humanity's Need of It" by our honourable friend Professor Dr. Muhammad Youssef Moussa. This book is one of the best on this subject I have ever seen. It combines dogmatic theology, history, doctrine, jurisprudence, exposition, teachings, intellect and sentiment.

The best thing distinguishing it from other books tackling the same subject is its courage, candour, clarity and profound belief that Islam is the eternal religion, which is fit for all ages and places and which meets the need of humanity at any time and everywhere. The book is also distinguished by the intellectual independence characterizing its researches. It contains the gist of long reading and strenuous thinking in its useful studies, and information which is needed by scholars and professors.

Foremost among the best parts of the book is the fourth chapter on Islamic law, which almost covers the half of it. I believe that eminent scholars cannot do without reading it. The most beautiful part of that chapter is that which is entitled: "The Characteristics and General Bases of Islamic Legislation."

The author's faith and love of realism prompted him to add to the academic researches constituting the book a separate chapter entitled "The Future of Islamic Legislation" in which he boldly called for the adoption and application of the Islamic law in all Muslim countries.

I have also admired in this book the author's faith and his dealing at length with the question of the other world, of Paradise and the happiness it provides for humanity. This is a subject evaded by many contemporary writers and merely touched upon by many young scholars, as they find in it

strangeness and deviation from both the sentiment and the spirit of the age. It can therefore be taken as a criterion according to which the faith and courage of writers and researchers are judged.

The writer of these lines may not be in full agreement with all that has been stated in the book, which contains a variety of subjects. The disagreement may be either on some of the thoughts contained in the book or on the way those thoughts were expressed. But this does by no means depreciate the book. It even heightens its value as it indicates that the book was not written in a thoughtless, monotonous style, void of novelty. However, the writer of this preface believes that the book has filled a big gap as regards this subject, that there is dire need of more similar books and that it deserves to be translated into the languages of the West as well as of the Islamic East. God is He Who ordaineth success and giveth help.

Abul Hassan Ali Al Husni Al Nadawy

Vice-Chairman,
Jamiat-I-Ulama-I-Hind.

Lucknow, India.
21 Dhulhejja 1379.

INTRODUCTION

In the name of Allah, the Merciful, the Beneficent.

Praise be to God, the Sustainer of the Worlds.

The Merciful, the Beneficent,

Lord of the Day of Judgement.

Thee (alone) do we worship, and Thee (alone) do we beseech for help.

Guide us on the right path,

The path of those on whom Thou hast bestowed Thy Grace,

Not (of) those upon whom is (Thy) wrath and who have gone astray.

Amen.

Prayers and peace be unto the most honoured Prophet, Muhammad Ibn Abdullah, the last of all God's Apostles, who was sent to announce glad tidings, warn, be a light-giving torch and a mercy for Man after the features of truth had been effaced, media blinded and people gone astray. Through him, the Almighty saved the Arabs, guided the whole universe and immortalised His religion and law to be Man's guidance through all the ages.

This book is a study on "Islam and Humanity's Need of It." In our view, this study should be dealt with by many competent scholars, who have been acquainted with

conditions of the world before and after Islam and until our present time, thus enabling them to know the causes of glory, dignity and prosperity on the one hand and of perplexity, disorder and anxiety on the other, and the way leading to salvation from the troubles from which our present age is suffering.

In this study, I committed myself to precision and moderation. I resorted neither to unnecessary lengthy details nor to the extreme conciseness likely to cause the loss of part of the purpose of the book.

We beseech God to grant us aid, success and guidance.

PART I.

RELIGION — ISLAM IS THE TRUE RELIGION

THE NEED FOR IT — ITS CHARACTERISTICS

CHAPTER ONE

ISLAM IS THE TRUE RELIGION

Scholars in both old and modern times have engaged themselves in studying and defining religion. Thus, we now have various definitions close at times and far-removed at others. Religion may mean the social system adopted by a group of people performing certain rites and constantly developing actions, and believing in an absolute spiritual Power superior to all human beings. When this Power is monotheistic, it is called " Allah "

Some Westerners define religion as the collection of duties which Man has towards God, Society and Man himself.

Others say that it is the lot of beliefs and injunctions which should guide our behaviours with God, people and with ourselves.

In his book " Faiths and Creeds ", Al Shahrastany expresses the opinion that religion is obedience and resignation, and it may mean reward and reckoning.

Al Tahanwy says in his book " Index of Technical Terms " that religion is a divine institution guiding those who have reason — on their volition — to righteousness in this world and happiness in the hereafter. It can designate the faith of any Prophet, or it may be applied specially to Islam. It is related to God, having been issued by Him, to

the Prophet, having been revealed through him, and to the people who adopt it.

If religion is not taken as something revealed from the Almighty God but is considered from the linguistic point of view alone, then it will include both the true and the false creeds, except those which admit neither resurrection nor reward. This is because the Arabic term for religion (dîn) is derived from the root "dân", meaning "to reward."

When the holy Qurân says *"To you be your religion, to me my religion"*, it indicates that the word "religion" includes the untrue creeds as well, for it has designated as a religion the pagan belief of the Arabs in the days of ignorance.

But true religion, according to the Islamic law, is that which is revealed from God for the elect among His creatures, for man's guidance along the right path. It includes doctrines and principles on which God's Apostles — prayers and peace be unto them — do not differ. This is evidenced in the Almighty's saying: *"To you hath He prescribed the faith which He commanded unto Noah, and which we have revealed to thee, and which we commanded unto Abraham and Moses and Jesus saying 'observe this faith, and be not divided into sects therein' "*. This means that God has revealed one single religion to Muhammad and the other Prophets.

In the true religion, one must observe one's feeling and the realization of a supreme Power or an absolutely Higher Being, who has created the world and taken care of it and designed its affairs according to His own Will. One must also observe one's feeling of a sentiment inducing to the belief in that Higher Being and the establishment of a close link with

Him necessitating His worship through the performance of various rites. In addition to these, the pious must have a strong belief that this Higher Being, Who is God, will reward him in the other world according to his deeds in this life.

Religion with its different definitions is as old as humanity itself. Not a single group of human beings lived in ancient times without having a religion and certain idols to which that group turned by intimidation at times and by inclination at others. Perhaps both intimidation and inclination constitute a characteristic feature distinguishing every religion, right from the earliest times until our present age.

It suffices us here to point out the various religions known to humanity during the earliest ages, namely, thousands of years before Christ — in Egypt, Babylon, Assyria, the area between the two rivers, India and her environs, China and her environs, Persia and the other countries of the world.

Man is inquisitive by nature. We may even say that he is innately religious, for we have not seen a single human group living in any age without having its own way of thinking in accounting for the phenomena and events of the universe as well as for the origin and destiny of Man.

Every group has therefore its own view, whether true or false, as regards all those things. It also has its own conception of the Power dominating all those phenomena and events, and thus has fear and reverence of that Power. Such a feeling induces the group to make offerings and perform certain rites in a bid to win the favour and avoid the wrath

of that Power. All this is nothing but part of the aspects and forms of religion (1).

It is true that there may be — as it is always found in every age — a minority in one nation or more, caring neither for religion nor for religious issues, and driven in its life by the sweeping current of materialism and the heavy burdens of life, while considering life merely as a game and pastime having nothing to do with religion. But this does not deny the fact that such a minority never remained without adopting one religion or another. Or at least, there is nothing to indicate that religion came later than Man and human society.

It can fairly be said that Man may have led part of his life, whether short or long, without sciences, arts or industries. But history has never known a human group that lived without a religion.

In this connection, we find that the Twentieth Century Larousse Dictionary says that sentiment, or the religious instinct, is universal and known to all human races. It was observed in its primitive form with the most barbarian people who led a life nearer to the life of animals.

This instinct only weakens, diminishes or fades away completely when civilization becomes excessively luxurious, and this happens among a very limited number of people. The interest in divine and metaphysical aspects is one of the general and universal tendencies, which have steadily and constantly existed in Man.

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(1) It is advisable, in connection with the East alone, to refer to the «Philosophy In The East» by Mason — Aursel.

Thus religion is an instinctive thing in Man, deeply rooted in his nature. The belief in something or in a certain Being or Power, and the adoption of the religion of that Being or Power is a natural disposition in Man. It is one of the things needed for his soul and dominating him throughout his life. It must therefore be watered and nourished like any other natural matter in him.

If religious feeling is original in Man to such an extent at any time or age, and whatever the degree of his culture and civilization, emanating from his inquisitive soul which always fears the unknown and yet aspires to it, then religions will remain as long as there is humanity, although they may develop in some aspects to match the intellectual and cultural progress achieved by the human groups.

Were the religious instinct not so deeply rooted, it would have been difficult for the Prophets and Messengers of God to convey the divine revelation to those to whom they had been sent; or to be more precise, the confirmation of the revelation in the hearts of those people would have been a very difficult task.

But each one of those Prophets and Messengers of God did not find it his duty to create that religious feeling in the hearts of the people to whom the Almighty God had sent him, because this feeling is instinctive and innate in Man as we have already known. Each one of them found that people had deviated from the path leading to the true religion and the Deity, Who deserves to be worshipped.

The Prophets found some of the people at their time worshipping idols and images while others worshipped stars, planets, trees or animals. Their passion was therefore to

guide those people along the right path and to show them the true religion until the belief in the oneness of the Eternal God Who alone deserves to be worhsipped, obeyed and followed, was invoked in them.

Accordingly, we can state that the propagation of tho true religion does not mean the creation of religious inclinations which did not exist before. It only means the direction of those inclinations in the right way, which leads to the true religion. Thus the divine revelation involves mercy to all creatures. It guides the souls which have gone astray, and helps the mind to reach Truth by the shortest and easiest ways.

We are in no need, after all that has been said, to point out the fact that humanity has known many unheavenly religions as it has known the divine religions conveyed through God's Messengers in various ages and different times. Judaism, Christianity and Islam are among those divine religions. But Islam is the last of messages revealed from the Almighty God to His slaves. It is the religion approved of by God for mankind at all times and in all places. Humanity urgently needs Islam.

CHAPTER TWO

THE NEED FOR ISLAM

Man, who is one of the atoms constituting the world, fails, if left to himself, to realize the cause of his existence as much as he fails to understand his goal and all that involves good for him. For this reason, God hath not left him helpless, but has provided him with a mind to guide him to what is good and to show him the clear main road.

Through this divine instrument, Man has tried to know the universe, his position in it and the object which he should cherish. This has resulted in the formation of the human heritage, prior to the age of prophethoods, with its institutions, views and ideas in religion, sociology, physics and the other fields of knowledge.

But the mind may go astray, and it does too excessively when Man tries to realize what is beyond his ability, particularly with regard to the sublime world and all that is connected with it. Hence came all the metaphysical philosophies left to us by the nations and generations which were deprived of the light of the divine inspiration, in Eastern countries, Greece and elsewhere. These philosophies, as a whole, are nothing but a ridiculous thing to the wholesome mind, as they deify human beings, and even animals and inanimate objects. They make gods jealous and at war with each other for the sake of the trifles of this mortal world !

But God, Who is Just and Wise, is aware that man becomes nothing if left to himself and to his own mind, and in order to make man responsible for his deeds as well as for the achievement of the purpose of his existence, it will be just to make for him the right way distinct from error and to separate truth from falsehood. This happened through the elect of His creatures, whom He chose to convey His messages, which came in succession to correspond with the developing mentalities of the people or nation for which those messages were sent.

Thus we have seen religions coming, each in the wake of the one before it, and God's messengers sent one after another. Prior to the mission of the Prophet Muhammad, each religion had a limited number of followers and was confined to a certain period of time. Then Muhammad — prayers and God's peace be upon him — was sent with Islam, the religion of all mankind, when absolute necessity made his mission inevitable in order to bring the world out of the darkness, error and falsehood into which it had fallen.

Had it not been for this absolute necessity, Heaven would not have communicated a new message to Earth, as such communication involves a violation of the laws of nature, and it happens only when humanity becomes in urgent and dire need of a new religion.

Surely the world was in dire need of a new religion, after the voice of the previous Messengers of God had become silent and the main features of the divine messages to God's slaves had been lost. This was witnessed in the Arab countries where the sacred House is situated, in Greece — the second homeland of Christianity, in Persia which had

Manichaeism, Zoroastrianism and Mozdaism, as well as in many other countries of the world.

1) In Arabia, people worshipped the statues, idols and images which they themselves had hewed out, and they took them for Lords beside God. In his book "The History of The Prophet", Ibn Hesham says that any one of those Arabs, who happened to go on a journey, had to take four pieces of stone on his arrival at his destination in order to deify one of them, which he considered the best, and to make of the remaining three porters for his cooking-pot.

Their magnification of idols was such that the dwellers of every house made an idol for their worship. And when any one of them went out on a journey, the last thing he had to do on his departure and the first on his arrival home was to touch the idol with a view of invoking blessings from it !

When the Almighty sent His Prophet Muhammad with the message of Monotheism, the people of Quraish asked surprisedly, to quote the holy Qurân : "*Maketh he the gods to be one god? A strange thing forsooth is this!*"

2) Apart from Magianism, Persia had the dual religions, whose followers, divided as they were into different sects, were unanimous as regards the saying that there are two gods — light and darkness — the one for good while the other is for evil. The followers of those different sects were oblivious of the fact that there is only one God, Who has created the Heavens and the Earth and has ordained the darkness and the light.

Mozdaism was one of those misleading religions which called for absolute nihilism. Its founder Mozdak went on in his nihilism to the extent of "making women and money

a public property in the possession of which all people were partners, exactly like water, fire and pasture " (1).

Side by side with this grave error in religion and creed, social injustice reached an unbearable extent in those countries. The Chosroes claimed that there was divine blood in their veins. This made their subjects consider them gods, and thus make offerings to them and suffer intolerable things.

Furthermore, the Persian society was a sectarian one based on ancestral and professional considerations. Every citizen had to be content with his social position and never covet what was above it. Thus the gap between the various sects of that society was impassable and some of its members took others for lords.

And when Al Mughira Ibn Shoaba went to meet the Persian Commander Rustom during the wars between the Muslims and the Persians, he tried to sit on the throne beside Rustom, but the people of the latter forced him to descend. He therefore said the following, according to the narrative of Ibn Garir Al Tabary in his book of history :

" We, the Arabs, are equal. None of us enslaves another except in fighting. I thought you treated your people kindly as we do. Better than this behaviour of yours would be your saying that some of you are the lords of the others and that nobody is to sit beside your lords, so that I could have refrained from doing it. However, I have come here only at your invitation, and I have now learnt that your

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(1) «Faiths and Creeds» by Al Shahrastani — published by El Sheikh Ahmad Fathy Muhammad — Vol. II : 85.

affairs will be vanished and you will be vanquished because no kingdom can be successful when behaving in such way or having such a mentality "

Because of this, we see the English historian Thomas Arnold stressing that the deterioration of the religious and social conditions of Persia " caused the success of the Arab conquest and made it appear in the light of a deliverance for the Persians from their conditions hitherto. When the Muslims achieved their purposes in that way, the Persians could breathe again and they thus welcomed the Arabs" (1).

Arnold's claim that only this caused the victory of the Arabs is a baseless claim in which he followed other orientalists. The real cause, which the author himself mentioned in other places of the same book, is that Islam is the religion of the perfect instinct. Thus it is accepted by the hearts and minds which are inspired by divine clarity. The Muslims fought their enemies wholeheartedly in order to realize one of the two best things. And there is a great difference between those who fight to exalt the Word of God and those who fight to defend a corrupt creed, a furious state and an abominable oppressive social institution !

3 In Greece as well as in the Near Eastern countries — Syria and Egypt — Christianity, which was tolerant in origin, was the predominant religion. At first, it preached the worship of the one God alone and it considered the Messiah — peace be unto him — as nothing more than God's Word, Slave and Messenger. But later, it was reduced to a complicated religion impossible to understand.

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(1) The Preaching of Islam — by Thomas Arnold.

The Christian Church split into two — an Orthodox in the Eastern Empire and a Catholic in the Western Empire, centered in Rome. This split had far-reaching and dangerous results, as each of the two new Churches constitued a completely independent religion rampant with strong hatred for the other. This was because the split was in principles and basic rules and not merely in minor issues.

Each of the two Churches labelled those who did not adopt its doctrine as dissenters, who must be punished and oppressed. This made people feel that the Christian life was losing its rigorous ideals. They therefore strove to break away from a world which could no longer be tolerated by them. The wastes of Egypt were peopled with solitaries seeking communion with God (1).

Such corruption in creed, split in religion and oppression of those who dissented from the State's official doctrine, were obviously to be followed by licentiousness in morals, corruption in administration and oppression in society. However, the rich could evade this oppression by means of their power and money.

These aspects of corruption, of which we have mentioned some, undoubtedly had their influence over the spread of Islam in many parts of the Roman Empire, where Christian people welcomed it as they found in it their salvation from the distress and agony hitherto afflicting them.

In this connection, Thomas Arnold to whom we have already referred, said : " The African and Syrian doctors has substituted obstruse metaphysical dogmas for the religion of

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(1) The Byzantine Empire — by Norman Baynes.

Christ.. The people were practically polytheists, worshipping a crowd of martyrs, saints and angels; the upper classes were effeminate and corrupt, the middle classes oppressed by taxation, the slaves without hope for the present or the future. Islam swept away this mass of corruption and superstitions.

" Islam was a revolt against empty theological polemics; it was a masculine protest against the exaltation of celibacy as a crown of piety. It brought out the fundamental dogmas of religion — the unity and greatness of God."(1).

" It showed that God is merciful and righteous and that He claimeth obedience to His will, resignation and faith. It proclaimed the responsibility of man, a future life and a day of judgment."

" It enforced the duties of prayers, amlsgiving, fasting and benevolence. It thrust aside the artificial virtues, the religious frauds and follies, the perverted moral sentiments and the verbal subtleties of theological disputants. It replaced monkishness by manliness. It gave hope to the slave, brotherhood to mankind and recognition to the fundamental facts of human nature ".

Now that more than one witness, from the Christian people themselves, have given clear evidence, we believe it has become quite clear that in addition to the oppressive social conditions prevailing over the Christian countries before Islam, the religious conditions, too, needed an urgent salvation to bring people out of darkness into light and of the narrowness of oppression into the ampleness of justice. This salvation was provided in Islam.

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(1) The Preaching Of Islam — by Thomas Arnold — pp. 67 and 68.

Thus, humanity had looked forward for a long time to a new righteous and merciful religion. And this was Islam, the last of all heavenly religions. We are not, therefore, to expect another religion from Heaven nor another Messenger from God, the Wise, the Knowing, as the Prophet Muhammad was the last of the most elect Messengers of God.

What do we therefore wish for the improvement of the world in which we live, after the failure of all the political, economic and social institutions and the emergence of philosophies calling for the denial of God's existence, escape from responsibility and deviation from virtuous morals ?

We wish for nothing other than to have this Islamic religion, to have the true belief and understanding of it and to make of ourselves sincere advocates and solicitors, who will devote their lives to its propagation and find great happiness in that, and who will — in private and public — be good models and pious examples speaking for the magnitude of Islam.

The world is still in ardent need of this religion, as there is no salvation for humanity except in believing in Islam and in following it. It is this religion which enjoins what is right, forbids what is wrong, calls for truth and guides us on the right path.

CHAPTER THREE

FROM THE CHARACTERISTICS OF ISLAM

Every religion has its own characteristics, which stinguish it from other religions. This leads us to ask hat are the characteristics of Islam for whose advocation e spare no effort and without which there can be no salvation for the world after it has split into conflicting camps — each waiting for any change of fortune to befall the other — and has suffered from heavy calamities and afflictions from which it does not know how to escape.

It is not easy nor it is required by this limited study to enumerate all the characteristics of Islam communicated by the last of the divine Apostles, who brought the true religion chosen by the Almighty God for the whole world and for all human beings until the advent of the Hour.

Thus, it will suffice us here to speak in brief about some of those characteristics. Islam is the creed of religious unity, political unity and social unity. It is the religion of the mind and intellect, of the instinct and clarity, of liberty and equality as well as of humanity. For all this, it can be said that Islam is a religion and a state, and it is this religion which proclaimed the rights of Man.

1) RELIGIOUS UNITY

Surely Islam is the religion not only of Monotheism but also of Unity. The term "Monotheism" has acquired one

sole meaning beyond which it does not go, namely, the dictum that there is one God only, Who has created the Heavens and the Earth and all that is between them, and that everything shall be taken back to Him. This meaning is against the saying that there are two gods or a plurality of gods.

Hence Islam does not merely call for the belief in the Unity of God, as it is based on "Unity" in everything and matter, and it covers the divine, political, social and all the other spheres of life in this world.

Islam came when people all over the world were worshipping a diversity of gods. The first thing it did was to discard all those gods and to declare that there is one God only, Whose is the kingdom of the Heavens and of the Earth. Islam rejects the idea of the plurality of gods conceived by polytheists in general as well as the Persians' notion of the religious duality, which says that there are two gods — one for good and the other for evil. It equally rejects the belief in the trinity adopted by the Christians after their distortion of the Torah and the Gospel.

The holy Qurân stipulates the monotheistic doctrine in many verses. In some of these verses the Almighty says : "*Say He is God alone*". "*It is unto God that the mosques are set apart, call not then on any other therein with God*". "*Your God is one God: there is no God but He, the Compassionate, the Merciful*" and "*Say: Verily, He is one God, and I truly am guiltless of what ye join with Him*".

Addressing the Christians who believed not in true Christianity, the Almighty says in other verses: "*Say not 'Three' (there is a Trinity) — Forbear — it will be better*

for you" and *"They surely are Infidels who say, 'God is the third of three:' for there is no God but one God"*.

What is really strange, but significant of the corruption of the mind and the inability to discriminate between what is right and what is wrong is the fact that although Islam brought the monotheistic doctrine to the polytheists and proved its soundness through reasonable and sentient arguments, yet, the polytheists still said, as stated in the Qurân : " *Maketh he the gods to be but one god? A strange thing forsooth is this!* "

The polytheists said this while seeing that their alleged gods could neither see, hear, profit them anything, nor create a single fly even if they assembled and worked concertedly for that purpose. But what can be said in the face of the error of the mind, the corruption of the sense and the power of blind imitation ?

Islam did not only proclaim the unity of God, Who alone deserves to be worshipped, but it also proved that it constituted with the other divine religions preceding it one "unity" and one message granted by the Almighty God unto all mankind. These divine religions complement each other in conformity with the law of gradation in education, and all of them aim at one single goal, even if the media leading to that goal differ with time or people.

Let us hear in this connection what the Almighty says in Surat "Al Shoura" (the Counsel) . " *To you hath He prescribed the faith which He commanded unto Noah, and which We have revealed to thee, and which We commanded unto Abraham and Moses and Jesus, saying : 'Observe this faith, and be not divided into sects therein.'* ". He then enjoineth His Apostle to say : " *In whatever Books*

God hath sent down do I believe". The reference here is to the Qurân and the rest of the divine Books preceding it.

Let us also hear the Almighty's Saying in Surat "Al Baqara" (the Cow) : *" Say ye : ' We believe in God, and that which hath been sent down to us, and that which hath been sent down to Abraham and Ismael and Isaac and Jacob and the tribes : and that which hath been given to Moses and to Jesus, and that which was given to the Prophets from their Lord. No difference do we make between any of them : and to God are we resigned (Muslims) ' "*.

Similar to this is the Almighty's Saying near the end of the same sura : *" The Apostle believeth in that which hath been sent down from his Lord, as do the faithful also. Each one believeth in God and His angels, and His Books, and His Apostles : we make no distinction between any of His Apostles"*.

In these verses as in many others dealing with the same subject, there is a sound proof that Islam considers the messages of all Apostles as one "Unity" which cannot be divided, and that he who does not believe in any one of them can by no means be considered a Muslim. It results from this that all people are equal before these religions and rules and also before God, and that there is no discrimination between the followers of this Apostle or of the other one as long as they all believe in the mission of the last of all Prophets and Apostles, best prayers and divine peace be unto all of them.

Islam never says what was said by the followers of Moses and Jesus — peace be unto them — *"None but Jews or Christians shall enter Paradise"*. It refutes this state-

ment, which discriminates between religions and both their exponents and followers, in compliance with God's Saying: "*But they who set their face with resignation Godward, and do what is right — their reward is with their Lord; no fear shall come on them, neither shall they be grieved*".

In an earlier verse, the Almighty says: "*Verily, they who believe (Muslims), and they who follow the Jewish religion, and the Christians, and the Sabeites — whoever of these believeth in God and the last day, and doeth that which is right, shall have their reward with their Lord: fear shall not come upon them, neither shall they be grieved*". (1)

The principle included in these two verses explicitly states the unity in religion as well as in God's messages to His Prophets and Apostles, which was communicated by Islam. It also states the resulting unity in rights and duties as well as in responsibility and reward in this world and in the next one.

Hence, we see Al Imam Al Shatby points out in his book "Al Muwafaqat" that the Meccan Suras of the holy Qurân stipulate laws and rules governing universal issues, which do not concern one particular individual or group, but are rather of interest to everybody, and will remain to be so for ever. No religion differs from another as regards those issues, and it is therefore beneficial to the whole world to follow them at all times and places.

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(1) Obviously the belief in God necessitates the belief in all His Apostles and the messages sent through them. Surely the last of all Prophets and Apostles is not excepted.

2) POLITICAL UNITY

All that we have said relates to the divine religious side. As to the political side, we see the Almighty God granted Islam to the Arabs, who had hitherto been completely disintegrated tribes, feeling mutual hatred and engaged in constant warfare against each other. Hence passed what is known in history as "The days of the Arabs", namely, their wars in the time of ignorance before the advent of Islam.

Some of the Arab countries were "Emirates" ruled by Princes while others were partly autonomous though politically they followed either Persia or Greece. Now what did Islam do with those disintegrated tribes and nations ?

The answer is that Islam welded all those forces into a truly united nation under one single ruler, following one unified policy and aiming at one sole goal, namely the propagation of the true religion among all human beings to be their guiding beacon to good in this world as well as in the hereafter.

Foremost among the things done in this connection by the Prophet Muhammad — God's peace and prayers be upon him — was his elimination of the old feud constantly aflame between the Aws and the Khazraj in the city of Yathrib. The Prophet united these two tribes and constituted of them "Al Ansar" (the helpers), who helped him against his enemies, the polytheists. This fact is well known to all who have read the books dealing with the history of the dawn of Islam.

And when he migrated to Mediana, he established an atmosphere of brotherhood between the Muhajereen (emig-

rants) and the Ansar, who became brothers in religion and in all other things, and who fought hand in hand for the cause of God and for His religion which He has chosen for all mankind.

The political unity effected by Islam and preserved by the Apostle and the believers can be evidenced in the incident in which the first Caliph was elected. When the Prophet died, the Muslims convened at "Saqifat Bani Saada" to choose a successor for him. The Ansar held that it was their right that the Caliph should be elected from among them due to the help they had extended to Islam and its Apostle. But Abu Bakr and all the Muhajereen with him, though they acknowledged the support and feats of the Ansar, nevertheless maintained that the Caliph must be elected from among the Quraishites in pursuance of the Prophet's tradition.

With that, Al Habab Ibn Al Munzer, who was from the Ansar, proposed the election of two Princes — one from the Ansar and the other from the Muhajereen. But Omar "Al Farouq" (the wise) objected to that proposal saying: "This is far from being possible, as no two Princes can come in one century! In this way the question was settled by the election of Abu Bakr.

Then things went on well during the days of the glory of Islam, and there was one sole Caliph for the whole Muslim nation, however vast or extensive its state might have been. This helped the maintenance of the political unity of the whole nation.

For this cause, namely, the cause of preserving the political unity of the nation, Muslim jurists are of the opinion that there must be no two Caliphs for the one

nation and that it is duty of all Muslims to fight any one who dares to revolt against the "Imam" of the age with the purpose of claiming unrightly the Caliphate for himself.

How far this is our present condition in which the Muslim nation is divided into many states to the effect that each of them has one flag, one pulpit and one throne, when we are in ardent need of unity, solidarity and unanimity !

3) SOCIAL UNITY

If we move from the political side to the social side, we shall find that the social unity inculcated by Islam has attained its zenith and become of such great magnificence that as an example challenging the whole history and, all nations.

In India, for example, which is the homeland of one of the oldest world religions, we see Brahmanism itself discriminating between its followers, by dividing the nation into four castes putting the Brahmans, or monks, on the top and the low class, or the untouchables, in the bottom.

In order to realize the flagrant oppression and extreme cruelty of this sectionalism, it will be enough to know that Manu who was one of the legislators of this religion, said in the code of laws which bears his name that the Brahman must be respected and regarded with reverence only because of his ancestral relation, that his judgments are authentic by themselves, and that he is entitled to take ownership — when he needs it — of the property of any one belonging to the lower class on the pretext that the slave and all that in his hand are the property of his Master.

According to this religion, none of the people belonging to this unfortunate class is allowed to learn or have connection with anything dealing with religion, and he who dares to do this will be subjected to severe torture, such as the pouring of fused lead into his ears, the cutting out of his tongue or the tearing into pieces of his body ! (1).

If Brahmanism has thus discriminated between its followers and has set up society on such an abominable class-system, the Jews and Christians, too, who both belong to heavenly religions, interdicted others from enjoying God's ample mercy when they claimed that they alone were God's sons and beloved and when they said: " None but Jews or Christians shall enter Paradise " !

The Jews also discriminated in their laws between those who belonged to them and those who were aliens. For example, they strongly prohibited usury among the Israelites, although they made it their lawful profitable trade with non-Israelites, whose treachery was deemed lawful by them. This is because they said: " We are not bound to keep faith with the ignorant (Pagan) folk", when they were aware that they were liars inventing lies concerning God.

Another example is that they allow the enslavement of non-Israeli creatures while maintaining that no Israeli should — under any circumstance — enslave another Israeli,

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(1) Readers may refer to the books written on India and her civilization, foremost among which are «India's Cvilization» by Dr. Justave Lebon and the « Story of Civilization » by W. Diurant.

but should rather treat him kindly and should assist him in his life. (1).

In the face of these original tyrannical propensities of these peoples, which separate the one nation on the one hand from all mankind on the other, we find Islam explicitly declares with force knowing no bounds the social unity of all people, which necessitates equality in rights and duties without any discrimination between one race and another or between one individual and another.

Right from the beginning, Islam eliminated the state of arrogance attributed to the former days of ignorance, and outlawed boastfulness in tribe or ancestry, elucidating that the people are from one origin. Its glorious Book says : *" O men ! Verily, We hve created you of a male and a female; and We have divided you into peoples and tribes that ye might have knowledge one of another. Truly, the most worthy of honour in the sight of God is he Who feareth Him most".* This same meaning is expressed by the Prophet — God's prayers and peace be upon him — in the words : *" You all come from Adam, and Adam is of dust. An Arab has no merit over a non-Arab, unless he be of greater piety "*

Thus, there was no distinction on the ground of race, ancestry, wealth, dignity or any of the things used by people as criteria for the assessment of values and bases for distinction.

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(1) This discrimination is shown in the Torah — Leviticus XXV (32-39) and Deuteronomy XV (7-8). It is also experienced in their past and present history.

For this reason, Islam knows no classes established on the basis of race or ancestry for example, nor does it make laws for the Arabs and others for the non-Arabs as was the case with the Greeks and the Romans. In the sight of the Islamic religion, all the Muslims constitute one "unity" and are ruled by one single law with no discrimination between the ruler and the ruled, the noble and the commoner, the rich and the poor.

We all remember in this connection the attitude of the Prophet — God's prayers and peace be upon him — when Zeid Ibn Haritha interceded for Al Makhzumeyya, who had committed a theft, with a view to saving her from the execution of the legal punishment stipulated for that crime, namely the cutting off of her hand. The Prophet said : *" Do you intercede to withhold one of the ordinances of Allah ? By God, should Fatma, the daughter of Muhammad, commit a theft, I would surely cut her hand off "*.

There is no discrimination in all this between the Muslims and the non-Muslims staying in Dar El Islam (the Muslim realm) under its banner. On this point, the Prophet says that the non-Muslims are entitled to the rights enjoyed by us and to perform the duties incumbent upon us, although they may — if it pleases them — judge their own "personal status" affairs according to their own laws. The Prophet also enjoins us to leave them to their own beliefs.

Likewise, Islam equalizes those people and the Muslims and makes it the duty of the state to assist the needy among them, whether their need arises out of their disability to work or out of their failure to find work. Omar Ibn El Khattab is reported to have enjoined his officials in a public

circular to provide such needy people and their children with their requirements as long as they stayed in Dar El Islam.

The devotions ordained by Islam have had their strong influence over the consolidation, increase of power and provision of the factors of perpetuality and immortality to this social unity. Prayers are kept up by all at fixed times, fasting is observed by all during one special month, pilgrimage is performed by all those who are able to undertake the journey to it in well-known months and at one single place, and Zakat (poor due) is paid according to one single law applicable to all.

Relevant to this social side is what has been inculcated by Islam and urged by the ethics relating to or deriving value from it, namely, the necessity of effecting a harmony between body and soul on the one hand and between the outlook on this world and the outlook on the next world on the other.

Thus Islam, which is the religion of the perfect instinct, has given each of the soul and the body its right. Islam has neither sided with the Epicureans and the rest of the believers in the doctrine of sensual enjoyment in saying that pleasure is the highest good one must covet, nor with the Stoics who maintain that the highest good lies in the restraint of lusts, if not in their eradication, and in the complete rejection of pleasure in general, even including what is good in it.

Likewise Islam has neither called for the monastic life which the Christians invented and observed not as it ought to have been observed, nor for leaving this world altogether in a bid to obtain the recompense promised to be given

to the believers in the next world. The Almighty says in His glorious Book: "*Say: Who hath prohibited God's goodly raiment, and the healthful viands which He hath provided for his servants?*"!

The whole wisdom lies in what has been inculcated by Islam on that question. Its adoption protects society from going to excess in lusts, luxury and pleasure, or following restraint and privation. It will suffice us to point here to the fact that only a few generations after the advent of Christianity, which came with excessive monasticism and utter rejection of this world along with all its bounties, human will became so weak that they could no longer tolerat it, to quote El Sheikh Muhammad Abdou (1). And it became beyond people's power to adhere to its ordinances or follow its teachings.

Priests themselves rose ot vie with Kings in the acquisition of power and to compete with the secular people in the accumulation of money. The majority of them deviated from the genuine teachings of the religion through capricious interpretation and the making of false accretions or deletions as it pleased them.

4) RELIGION OF REASON AND INTELLECT.

Undoubtedly Islam is the religion of reason and intellect. This is testified by the holy Qurân, which extols reason in a great number of verses, as well as by many sayings

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(1) The Mission of Monotheism — 8th edition (page 167).

of the great Prophet. The doctrines enunciated by it and the rules and principles on which it is based also indicate this fact.

How great is the number of Qurânic verses which strongly urge the discardment of the imitation of ancestors, fathers and the like Chiefs! In Surat "Loqman", the Almighty blames those who dispute of God and of that which was brought by the truthful and faithful Apostle about Him, not with knowledge, guidance or illuminating Book, but only in rigid adherence to what was followed by their ancestors. This is expressed by the Almighty's sayings: "*But some are there who dispute of God without knowledge, and have no guidance and no illuminating Book*" and "*And when it is said to them, 'Follow ye what God hath sent down', they say, 'Nay, that religion in which we found our fathers will we follow'*".

Again, in Surat Al Baqara, He says: "*What! though their fathers were utterly ignorant and devoid of guidance?*". The meaning on this verse is: should they follow their fathers even if those fathers could understand nothing or be guided to truth?

How great is the number of the people, who were prevented from believing in the Truth revealed through either of God's Apostles by the rigidity they had inherited from their fathers and grandfathers or by their imitation of them! Such people are reported to have said as stated in Surat "Al Zukhruf" (The Ornament of Gold): "*Verily, we found our fathers of that persuasion, and verily, by their footsteps do we guide ourselves*"!

For this the Almighty God says after that verse: "*And thus never before thy time did we send a warner to*

any city but its wealthy ones said: 'Verily we found our fathers with a religion, and in their tracks we treated'. Say, — such was Our command to that apostle — 'What! even if I bring you a religion more right than that ye found your fathers following?'. And they said, 'Verily we believe not in your message'"!

As God finds fault with imitation and blames imitators in that way in His holy Book. He also enjoins us in many verses to resort to reason, observation and intellect, so that we can reach Truth and genuine faith in the One and only Creator and in all that was brought by His chosen Apostle.

Let us now listen to the Almighty's saying in Surat 'Al Baqara': "*Assuredly in the creation of Heavens and of the Earth; and in the alternation of night and day; and in the ships which pass through the sea with what is useful to man; and in the rain which God sendeth down from Heaven, giving life by it to the earth after its death, and by scattering over it all kinds of cattle; and in the change of the winds, and in the clouds that are made to do service between the Heaven and the Earth; — are signs for those who understand*".

In addition to this verse — which emphasizes the importance of observation and rational discernment for the attainment of faith in the only one God, Who has created the world from nothingness and Who arranges and governs its affairs as He pleases — we find many other verses concluded with the significant clause: "That ye may understand", "That ye may take warning", "That ye may be guided aright", For a people of discernment", "For those who reflect" and "For those who understand".

If Islam did urge people so much in its first holy Book

to observe the universe with its phenomena and manifestations and to use their faculties of discernment and intellect in contemplating all that surrounds man and all the world's creatures and things created by the Almighty God, it did this only because it wants us to go in quest of knowledge, using every means, and following every way, so that we can understand the universe with all its laws and orders to our best advantage. In this way, we can become real believers and can lead happy and prosperous lives.

Thus, we find God, the Knowing, the Wise, enjoins His Apostle to say : " *O my Lord, increase knowledge unto me* " and " *Shall they who have knowledge and they who have it not, be treated alike ?* ". We also listen in Surat Al Baqara the Almighty saying : " *He giveth wisdom to whom He will; and he to whom wisdom is given, hath had much good given him; but none will bear it in mind, except the wise of heart* ".

In addition to these Qurânic verses, we also hear the Prophet — God's prayers and peace be unto him — says : " *The acquisition of knowledge is a duty incumbent on every Muslim, male or female*", and " *The ink of the scholar is more holy than the blood of the martyr* ".

More details about the argument that Islam is the religion of reason, intellect and learning may come in another place of this book. It will therefore suffice us here to say that Islam has carried out its mission as best as it could in connection with reason and learning and that Arab-Muslim knowledge was foremost among the strongest causes of Europe's Renaissance in the Middle Ages.

Much of the knowledge, discoveries and inventions achieved by Muslim scientists in the various fields of

science and knowledge — particularly in physics, chemistry, astronomy, pharmacology, medicine and surgery — is still the subject of admiration and pride throughout the ages. These achievements have until today been fully apprciated by Western scientists.

5) RELIGION OF INSTINCT AND CLARITY

In addition to all that we have said, Islam is also distinguished by its being the religion of instinct and clarity — the instinct which is perfect and genuine and the clarity which does not make the mind fatigued or unable to understand or realize any of the things brought by it. And through these, Islam addresses the mind, the heart and the intuition altogether.

It suffices us in this connection to point out that Islam, from the doctrinal side, enjoins us only to worship the one God, who has not begotten a son nor has a partner in the Kingdom. It rejects the notion purporting that there are two gods quarrelling with each other, which was enunciated by dualism, whose advocates claim that life is a perpetual struggle between the god of good and that of evil.

Islam contains none of the Christian mysteries (1), which none of the Christian priests themselves can realize or understand in a correct and rational way, to the extent that they ask their followers to believe in those mysteries

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(1) Such as the mystery of the trinity or the mystery of the offering and its transformation into the flesh and blood of Christ.

without attempting to understand them. How far this is from being possible!

The idea of "mediation" between God and His slaves in Christianity is not acceptable to the mind, which finds no need and knows no object of it. There can be no meaning in the mediation of a priest between God and any one of the people, since God knows the nature of every person and there is no screen between Him and any of His creatures.

Islam therefore believes that any creature can turn directly towards God and can make his request without any mediation from any of the men of religion. On this, the Almighty says: "*And when My servants ask thee concerning Me, then will I be nigh unto them. I will answer the cry of him that crieth, when he crieth unto Me*".

Similar to the idea of mediation is the notion that man came to this life while being overloaded with the "original sin", from which there could be no escape for him. This notion is also enunciated by Christianity, and we know it from its books, which are available to us. Christians mean by this notion that man is born while bearing the burden of the sin which was committed by his great grand-father, Adam — peace be unto him — when he transgressed his God's command and ate from the tree forbidden to him by his Lord.

Thus they hold man responsible for a crime which he has never committed and they make him spend all his life suffering from the heavy burdens of that alleged sin. Then they ask him to believe in the doctrine of "crucifixion and atonement", according to which the "Messiah — god" is

said to have been crucified to atone for the effects of the first "sin" on mankind !

But how could it be possible for any sane mind to believe that "God", as they alleged, could be overpowered and crucified by His enemy while He was imploring help and getting no rescuer !

On the other hand, the Qurân, which is the holy Book of the Mulims, says about Adam — peace be unto him · "*And Adam disobeyed his Lord and went astray. Afterwards his Lord chose him for himself, and was turned towards him, and guided him.*" It also enunciates that nothing shall be reckoned to a man but that for which he has made efforts, and that the burdened soul shall not bear the burden of another.

It further enunciates that man is born completely innocent, that whosoever shall have wrought an atom's weight of good shall behold it and that whosoever shall have wrought an atom's weight of evil shall behold it, and that the Almighty God is Strong and Mighty, so that nobody can affect Him.

Finally, man can become a Muslim merely by believing in the one only God, who has no partner from among His creatures, as well as in all God's apostles without making any discrimination between them. Obviously nothing is simpler or clearer than this. Also nothing prevents the ordinary mind from accepting these principles and the rest of the principles on which Islam is based !

But, all Muslims — with the exception of a few, whose dissension is not worthy of any consideration — unanimously agree on giving preference to right discernment over

the apparent meaning of the Muslim laws as communicated in the written text, when there is contradiction between the two, while admitting the truth of the communicated text leaving what is intended of it to God, the Knowing, the Wise, or interpreting it according to the rules of the language in which the text is written and in conformity with what has been proved by discernment (1).

This agrees with the conclusions reached by Al Imam Al Ghazali in his book "Maarij Al Quds" (The Ascents of Jerusalem) that discernment is like the foundations of a building while "Al Sharia" (the Muslim law) is like the construction work in that building, and that both supplement each other and are useless if taken independently.

We may conclude our study of this point by mentioning that thanks to the fact that Islam is the religion of perfect instinct and that all its doctrines and devotions are rational, clear and easily comprehended, this true religion has never been subjected to any of the violent shocks from which Christianity has greatly suffered because of the difficult doctrines and mysteries it involves, which are beyond the realization of the mind.

Thanks to this same characteristic, to quote the well-known Italian historian Kitani, it happened that when the news of the sudden emergence of the new divine inspiration came out of the Desert, Christianity — which had hitherto been mingled with deceits and artificialities, torn by internal

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(1) Readers may refer to «Islam and Christianity» by the Imam El Sheikh Muhammad Abdu (pp 59-60) and to «The Law of Interpretation» by Al Imam Al Ghazali and «Towards A Good Message».

divisions, stripped of its basic doctrines, and its men overwhelmed by doubts and suspicions — became no longer able to resist the new religion, which managed to dissipate with one stroke all those doubts and to provide humanity with great advantage in addition to its undisputable simple and clear principles. At that time, the East left Christianity and threw itself into the arms of the Arabs' Prophet (1).

We may say then that all these things happened in the early years of Islam, thanks to that characteristic which distinguishes it over other religions. Its distinction will continue until the last days of this world, and people everywhere will always and for ever find Islam the only religion capable of attracting people because of its clarity in addition to its other characteristics.

6) RELIGION OF FREEDOM AND EQUALITY

One of the other important characteristics of Islam is that it is also the religion of freedom, with the full meaning and implications of the word as conceived by both the Westerners and the Arabs. The well-known social philosopher Auguste Compte said that the best freedom we can have is by working as best as we can to make the good inclinations in us dominate the bad ones.

Hemon on the other hand believes that freedom is man's self-restraint, which is achieved through the work of the operating mind and the will against lust and caprice.

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(1) « Hawleyat Al Islam » (The Almanac of Islam) — Vo. II (p. [illegible]).

Before these two thinkers, the well-known stoic philosopher "Epictetus" said: "He who wants to be a free man must neither fear nor covet anything owned by another person, otherwise he will be definitely a slave".

In addition to all these we know that freedom also includes the liberation of the mind from deceptions and false traditions, the liberation of the weak from the power and might of the strong, and the liberation of intellect, the will and work, as long as it does not do harm to others or to the public interests.

These are the meanings worthy to be mentioned for the word "freedom" in both the Western and the Eastern thought. Islam came with the enunciation of this freedom in all its forms.

It liberated man from the worship of idols and images, which neither sense nor have power over anybody either for good or for evil. It also liberated him from the errors and traditions of the fathers and ancestors, which were far from truth and which disagreed with the right thinking of the wholesome mind.

In this connection we find Islam strongly lay the blame on those who used to say when they were invited to the true faith : *" In this we found our fathers "*. In that way, those people fettered themselves and their minds by the false creed and misleading thought of their fathers and ancestors oblivious of the right they should have to enjoy the freedom of thought and belief and to follow Truth when guided to it.

Then, Islam strongly directs our attention to the fact that there is no reason in our taking each others for lords

beside God. This is expounded by the Almighty's injunction to His Apostle to say to the people of the Book, who gave a deaf ear to this advocacy : *" O people of the Book ! come ye to a just judgment between us, and you — That we worship not aught but God, and that we join no other god with Him, and that the one of us take not other for gods, beside God. Then if they turn their backs, Say 'Beak ye witness that we are Muslims*

On the people of the Book referred to in the above verse, who were Jews and Christians, the Almighty also says : *" They take their teachers, and their monks, and the Messiah, son of Mary, for Gods beside God, though bidden to worship one God only. There is no God but He ! Far from His glory be that they associate with Him ! "*

After this, we find Islam liberates the weak from the strong as well as from his power. The Arabs and the other nations before Islam disinherited the weaker element in the family, namely, women and children. They even considered the wife as part of the legacy left by the dead husband.

Justifying this conduct, the old Arabs said that inheritance was only for "those who could fight and get the booty ". They were therefore extremely surprised when they found the Qurân assigning a fixed share in the inheritance for the wife, the daughter and the little son. Thus, the abolition of the habits of the dark age of Arabian history involved the liberation of the weak — whose weakness was either instinctive or on grounds of age — from the oppression of the strong.

Leaving aside the question of inheritance, we find the strong — in general — cherished his strength with its

different causes, and was impelled by the force of his nature to wrong the weak, to the extent of humiliating and even enslaving him. This phenomenon is evidenced among individuals, groups and nations, in both the ancient and modern times.

Islam then came as a strong factor for the liberation of the weak from the power, oppression and tyranny of the strong. This is explicitly shown in many Qurânic verses, hadiths and in the tradition of the Prophet. — God's peace and prayers be upon him — as well as in his dealing with his companions.

His first Caliph, Abu Bakr Al Seddiq — may God be gracious to him — is reported to have said in the first speech he gave following his election by the Muslims for the Caliphate : " He who is weak among you is strong in my eyes until I take for him his right, and he who is strong is weak in my eyes until I take that right from him if God Wills. "

In addition to this, we remember the ever-resounding statement " Since when have you enslaved people when they were born freemen by their mothers ? ". This statement was made by the second Caliph, Omar Ibn Al Khattab, to his Commissioner to Egypt, Amru Ibn Al Ass, when a weak Copt complained to the Caliph against Amru's son for having beaten him. The Caliph summoned the aggressor and punished him for his offence against the weak Egyptian.

This statement is and will for ever be used as an example of equality between all people without any discrimination between the strong and the poor among them. We may therefore declare that humanity is indebted for

the principles of "liberty, fraternity and equality" to Islam and not to the French Revolution as alleged by those who are ignorant of Islam and its history or those who are prejudiced against the religion perfected by the Master of the worlds for all mankind.

This action by the Caliph, Omar, was not a freak not to be repeated for a second time. Equality between all people and the punishment of the aggressive strong in favour of the wronged weak were foremost among the principles on which Omar's rule was based. And there is no wonder in this since the Qurân enjoins it and both the Prophet and his first Caliph exercised it.

Whenever the wise Caliph Omar sent a Governor or Commissioner to any Muslim nation, he used to say: "O God! I have sent them neither to take their property nor to beat their bodies. And he who is oppressed by his ruler should owe no allegiance to anyone save myself".

In one of his Fridays' sermons he said: "O My Master Take I Thee to witness that I have sent the Governors to their districts to teach people their religion and the traditions of their Prophet, to divide their wealth between them and to act rightly and justly. And if they find any difficulty in that task, they may refer it to me".

In another sermon he referred to the same subject and said: "And he who is treated otherwise should report to me the wrong done to him, and I swear by Him Who holdeth my soul in His hands that I will punish the wrong-doer". With that Amru Ibn Al Ass rose and said: "O Commander of the Faithful! Do you mean that if any ruler happens to punish one of his subjects to mend him that you will make requital on that ruler?"

" Yes ", answered Omar, who added : " I again swear by Him Who holdeth Omar's soul in His hands to punish such a ruler. For how can I refrain from doing so when I saw the Apostle of God making requital on himself ? "

Then, we find that Islam strongly denounces him who yields to his caprice and allows his lusts to dominate his mind, which is the most honoured element in Man. It warns such a person against the grave consequences of that course, which may lead to error and to the torment of the Flame.

Referring to such a person, the Almighty says in Surat " Al Gatheya " (The Kneeling) : *" What thinkest thou? He who hath made a God of his passions, and whom God causeth wilfully to err, and whose ears and whose heart he hath sealed up, and over whose sight He hath placed a veil — who, after his rejection by God, shall guide such a one ? Will ye not then be warned ? "*.

To be truly free, man should not let his caprice, lusts and instincts enslave him, nor should he subject his conduct to anything but his wise discernment. This fact is emphasised by Islam in the Qurân and through the sayings of the Apostle, companions and true followers.

The Prophet, God's peace and prayers be unto him, is reported to have said : *" The best mind ever acquired by a person is that which guides that person to the right way and drives him back from danger when he is exposed to it"* . This means that man is saved from danger if he liberates himself from his caprice and follows the voice of the wholesome mind and the righteous conscience.

Aly Ibn Abi Taleb — may God be gracious to him — is also quoted to have said: "I fear two things for you: to follow your caprice or to have pretentious expectations, for the first prevents you from reaching Truth, while the second makes you forget the second world (1).

Foremost among the manifestations showing the interest which Islam takes in the freedom of every creature is that it does not accredit men of religion as mediators between God and His slaves to allow and disallow things or to absolve them of their sins as is the case with Christianity. Islam enables every creature to be in communion with the supreme Creator, to confer in private with Him and to implore forgiveness for his sin from Him, if he is sincere in his repentance, for is He alone Who hears the secret and the private discourse and Who answers the oppressed when they cry to Him and takes their ills and forgives whom He will, as stated in the holy Qurân.

Another manifestation showing the interest taken by Islam in the freedom of Man, from the doctrinal side, is that God sent His Apostle merely as a guide, announcer of good tidings and warner, without empowering him to force anybody to believe in Him or in His message.

This is explicitly shown in the Almighty's Saying in Surat "Al Baqara": "*Let there be no compulsion in Religion. Now is the right way made distinct from error*", and in Surat Younes (Jonah): "*But if thy Lord had pleased, verily all who are in the earth would have believed together. What! wilt thou compel men to become believers?*"

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(1) Readers may refer to Imam Abul Hassan Al Basry Al Mawardy's book «Ethics of the world and religion» — second edition

Islam's care and appreciation of the liberty of Man is further manifested in the views of the Muslim jurists who say : "If a boy, whose parentage is unknown, happened to be the subject of dispute between a Muslim and an infidel, and if the infidel said that the boy was his son while the Muslim said that he was only his slave, then the boy is to be released and be given to the infidel (1), because in that way the boy attains freedom at the moment and Islam later when he grows up and becomes able to understand the evidences proving the existence of the Almighty God and the mission of His Apostle who was sent with Islam, the most perfect of all religions.

Now we again return to imitation and its great danger, but from another side, namely, that of jurisprudence and the knowledge of the religious canons. This imitation involves rigidity and interdiction of the mind as well as of its freedom in "Ijtihad" (analogical deduction) when Man is prepared for it and is provided with all its necessary tools and when it is enjoined by Islam and urged by the Apostle, who accepted it from his Companions.

Ijtihad has been one of the important factors contributing to the flexibility and development of Islamic " Fiqh " (jurisprudence) and the establishment of the well-known jurisprudential doctrines spread all over the Muslim world today as well as of the other doctrines, which have already faded away and have no longer any followers to support them.

But very unfortunately and painfully, we have for

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(1) Readers may refer to «Al Dur Al Mukhtar» (The Selected Gem) Vol IV (pp. 465 and 466) — third edition.

long centuries been afflicted with rigidity and the imitation of certain doctrines, because it has been alleged that the gate to Ijtihad has for long time been sealed up !

Those who allege this make it incumbent upon every Muslim to imitate one of the established doctrines, although the expounders themselves of those doctrines prohibited imitation. Their prohibition was declared by Al Imam Abu Hanifa as well as by other leading jurists.

Al Imam Al Shafei, as narrated by Al Baihaqy, said: " He who seeks knowledge without argument is like a night wood-cutter carrying a bundle of wood in which there is a snake, which bites him without his realization" (1). Al Imam Ahmad Ibn Hanbal is also reported to have said : " Do not imitate me or any of the other Imams — Malek, Al Thawry or Al Awzai — but take knowledge from the sources of their knowlege, namely, the Qurân and the tradition of the Prophet.

Ismail Al Mozani states in the early pages of his "Summary of Jurisprudence" that he epitomises in it the learning of Al Imam Al Shafei in order to simplify it for whoever wanted it, while prohibiting him who reads it from imitating it or any similar work with a view to observe his religion and taking precautions for himself (2).

Now where is this freedom of thought, which is loved by God and His Apostle and on which the edifice of Islamic jurisprudence and learning — in general — have been based, in the attempts made by certain people in these days to

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(1 and 2) Readers may refer to «Aalam Al Muwaqleen» by Ibn Al Qayem — Vol. II (p. 139).

stop us within the bounds of the established doctrines and to disallow "Ijtihad" even for those who are fit for it, when we are in dire need for analogical deduction ?

7) RELIGION OF MANKIND

Islam is the last of all the divine messages sent from Heaven to Earth, and, as such, it has to be a universal religion for all people. The nature of this message must be of a kind that makes it fit for humanity in every age, generation and time. The personality, character and nature of the Prophet must be of the ideal type befitting his being the elect Apostle for all God's slaves so that every person can find in him his ideal and the light which will guide him throughout his life.

Thus, we find the Almighty God says on His Prophet in the holy Qurân : "*For thou art of a noble nature*", "*Hadst thou been severe and harsh-hearted, they would have broken away from thee*" and "*Now hath an Apostle come unto you from among yourselves: your iniquities press heavily upon him. He is careful over you, and towards the faithful, compassionate and merciful*".

On the nature and extent of his message, the Almighty says : "*We have not sent thee otherwise than as mercy unto all creatures*", "*And We have sent thee to mankind at large to announce good news and to warn*" and "*Blessed be He who hath sent down Al Furqan (the illumination) on His servant, that to all creatures he may be a warner*".

The Prophet, may God's prayers and peace be upon him, is enjoined by the Almighty to address all people, not

only the Arabs, saying: *"O men! Verily I am God's apostle to you all; Whose is the kingdom of the Heavens and of the Earth! There is no God but He" and "O men! I am only your open warner".*

Before Islam, the case was quite different. Prophets descending from Israel, for example, directed their calls only to their kinsmen or their countrymen. Thus their calls were confined to Syria, Egypt or Iraq alone.

It is historically proved that the message of Jesus, peace be unto him, later found someone to carry it to the Romans and non-Romans, or in other words, to take it beyond its first homeland, which marked its revelation through the sons of Israel. Yet, it is also proved that its earlier prophets and advocates never thought of making it a universal message for humanity at large. Their history is a true witness testifying what I am saying.

I think it is good in this connection to quote the good view on the same point of the scholar, Professor Suliman Al Nadawy, in which he says (1): "The sons of Israel confined the world to them alone and limited it by the boundaries of their states. They even claimed that the Lord of all the worlds was but the God of their nation only and that He was theirs rather than anybody else's.

"For this, we find the calls of the Prophets who descended from Israel, and their scriptures, did not spread among other nations. Both the Mosaic law and the Jewish religion are still confined to the Israelites alone. Their scriptures

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(1) «The Muhammadan Mission» (page 141).

address non but the Israelites and their God is to be called only by their tribes. Still more, Jesus tended nothing but the straying sheep of the descendants of Israel, and he conveyed his message in their villages and territory and amidst those who belonged to them.

We may add to this that the Qurân emphasizes the fact historically proved that the messages of prophets and apostles before Islam were private. Every apostle was sent to his own people alone. It will suffice us here to mention, as examples, the Almighty's Saying in surat Houd : "*We sent Noah of old unto his people* "*And unto Ad We sent their brother Houd*", "*And unto Themoud We sent their brother Saleh*" and " *And We sent to Madian their brother Shoaib* ".

He also says, with more generalization, in surat "Al Roum" (The Greeks) : "*We have sent apostles before thee to their people*", which means that each apostle was sent to his own people. Again in surat "Al Ra'ad" (Thunder) "*And every people hath its guide*".

But the mission of Islam as we said before is the first and last granted by God unto all people, whether they are red or yellow, white or black, Arabs or non-Arabs; for it is the last message from God to the whole world and to all human beings until the end of this life. Being thus, it is natural that it should be general and comprehensive.

The Prophet sent with that mission was fully aware of the great difference in that point between him and the Prophets who preceded him. He knew that he was the last of all Prophets and Apostles, as there will be no other Apostle after him until the end of this world. Thus, he

said as reported by both Al Imam Al Bukhari and Al Imam Muslim :

" The likeness of me and of the Prophets preceding me is as the example of a man, who constructed a house perfectly and beautifully, except at one angle where a brick was missing. People who saw that house toured around it appreciating its beauty and expressing the desire to have that brick put in the empty place. So, I am that brick and I am the last of all Prophets ".

The Prophet Muhammad also understood well the great mission entrusted to him by the Almighty God. He therefore spared no effort for its universalisation. We see him seizing the opportunity accorded by the conclusion of the Hudaibeya Peace to convey his message to the world then known. He sent letters to the Kings and Heads of State of the neighbouring countries inviting them to Islam, which God has ordained to be His last and universal message to the whole world. Accordingly, Dehya Al Kalby was sent to the Roman Emperor Heraclius, Abdullah Ibn Huzafa Al Sahmy to Chosroes Parvis of Persia, Hateb Ibn Abi Balta'ah to the Egyptian Sovereign Al Muqawqas, Omar Ibn Umayya to the Negus of Abyssinia and Shuga' Ibn Wahab Al Assady to the Syrian King Al Harith Al Ghassany.

He also sent Amru Ibn Al Ass to the Sovereigns of Oman, Sulait Ibn Amru to the Sovereigns of Al Yamama, Al Ala'a Ibn Al Hadramy to Al Munzir Ibn Sawy Al Abdy — the King of Bahrein and Al Muhajir Ibn Abi Umayya Al Makhzumy to Al Harith Ibn Abd Kalal Al Hemiary, the King of Yemen.

Thus, it is now clear that the Prophet sent ambassadors to the Kings and Commanders of the neighbouring countries to

convey to them his comprehensive and universal message, inviting them to Islam and the guidance and light it brought for all mankind (1).

It can be said that the school of the Apostle — God's prayers and peace be upon him — was another example of the universality of his mission, as it included disciples and followers of different races and nationalities. There were Abu Bakr, Omar, Osman, Ali, Talha, Al Zubair and many others from Quraish. There were also Abu Zar of the Gaffar tribe, Abu Horaira of the Yemeni Aws tribe, Abu Moussa Al Ash'ari of another Yemeni tribe, Damad Ibn Tha'alaba of the Qahtanite Uzd tribe, Khubab Ibn Al Art who was the brother of Bani Tamim, and both Munqiz Ibn Haban and Munzir Ibn A'id of Bahrain.

Furthermore, there were Farwa Ibn Ma'an from Syria, Belal from Abyssinia, Suhaib from Greece, Suliman from Persia, Firoz Al Dialmy and others. Hence, we find the Muhammadan school was ready to welcome any comer from any nation, human race or class.

After all this, the last of all God's Prophets and Apostles — upon whom all peace be — constituted in his great person and most noble character and nature a supreme ideal combining all the ideas of goodness, righteousness and truth characterizing other Prophets.

He had in him the strictness and resentment against the infidels and the polytheists of Noah, the rebellion and

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(1) Readers may refer to the History of Ibn Hesham — Vol. IV (pp. 228 & 229) where the Prophet is reported to have said to his Companions: «God hath sent me a mercy for all mankind. Do you share, may God be merciful with you».

struggle to destroy idols and images characterizing Abraham, the inclination to enact the adequate rules and wise laws, which should be adopted by all the believers and which distinguished Moses, and the leniency, forgiveness and love known about Jesus. He used to pray to his God with the words: *"O God! Guide my people as they are devoid of knowledge"*.

We also find in him the patience of Ayub (Job) under misfortunes and calamities and his gratitude for the favour and strength granted unto him by God after the trial, the patience of Youssef (Joseph) under temptation and his insistence on calling for the divine Truth revealed to him when he was suffering from the hardships of captivity and the affliction of imprisonment, and the power of Yaacoub (Jacob) to overcome despair even when it reached its highest pitch together with his confidence and trust in God.

Hence, we find the Apostle combining in his great character and most fine and illustrious history all those ideas. He even excelled his brethren, the Prophets and Apostles who preceded him in each of those ideals. Everyone of his followers and Companions finds in him his ideal, which he eagerly yearns to approach and follow.

There is no better evidence than this to prove that his mission was universal, that he was the last of all Prophets and Apostles as no other Prophet or Apostle was to come after him, and that his perfectly comprehensive and universal message is a beacon and guiding light for anyone seeking divine guidance anywhere and at any time.

8) RELIGION AND THE STATE

Finally, as Islam is the religion of all mankind and as the Wise God willed that it should be the last divine message to the whole world until He inherits the Earth and all that is upon it, this religion has not therefore let its people adopt the laws and rules they like for governing their actions and behaviour in the various spheres of life. It has provided them with the laws and rules necessary for the establishment of the wholesome society everywhere and at anytime with no discrimination between one nation and another.

This is because Islam is not merely a religious creed or an ethical system. It is a "religion and a state" with all the significance and implications of this term.

Undoubtedly Islam is a perfect and comprehensive institution. It governs man and his actions in all his conditions, in connection with his own person, his relation with the Almighty God, his place in his family and his various relations with the society in which he lives. It also governs the relations between the Muslim State and all the other countries. Thus it can be said that it organizes all those conditions and relations by introducing the general rules and principles on which they should be based as well as the different regulations, laws and systems governing them.

Yet, it is also true that the Mosaic religion, too, did introduce a few rules and regulations for the organization of human dealings. But some of them were so severe that they befitted only the severe and harsh-hearted Jews. Then, Islam came and alleviated the severity of those rules, widen-

ed those of them which had become narrow and provided those which they lacked.

Thus, Islam has introduced what is fit to be perfect principles and laws for the establishment of the state on reasonable and acceptable bases, and to meet the needs of any society at any time or age.

Thanks to all this, the Muslim nation has never been in need of adopting the laws of any other nation, contrary to the case with the Jews and Christians, who were in need of taking their laws from pagan nations like the Romans, due to the absence of the laws suitable for the building up of the nation and the state in their holy Books.

9) ENUNCIATION OF MAN'S RIGHTS.

It is Muhammad, God's prayers and peace be upon him, who explicitly and strongly proclaimed more than thirteen and a half centuries ago Man's rights to all mankind. This was in compliance with God's Command, because it was God Who sent him to liberate man and be a mercy for all people with a message destined to be universal and eternal throughout the ages and to radiate light and guidance everywhere.

The Almighty God — Who knows all that is fit for humanity at large and Who is Wise in His enactment of laws, principles and rules — revealed to His great Prophet, who was brought up orphan, poor and illiterate, the Sayings : "*Only the faithful are brethren*", "*O men ! verily, We have created you of a male and a female; and We*

divided you into people and tribes that ye might have knowledge of one another. Truly, the most worthy of honour in the sight of God is he who feareth Him most", and "*And now have We honoured the children of Adam*".

This noble meaning was emphasized by the Apostle who said : "*People are as equal as the teeth of a comb*" "*There is no special merit of an Arab over a non-Arab except by righteousness and piety*" and "*You are all from Adam and Adam is of dust*".

Thus, Islam came with new standards for dignity, honour, merit and noble manners, when we find the Jews and Christians say : "*Sons are we of God and his beloved*". They also want to make God's mercy and good pleasure be confined to them alone. They therefore say : "*None but Jews or Christians shall enter Paradise*" !

On the other hand, the Romans claimed that it was quite natural that they should be the rulers of the whole world as other people were but barbarians and servants for them, the Arabs before Islam were of the opinion that it was they alone who were the masters of eloquence, rhetoric and command of words, the Brahmans believed that God had created them from His noblest part and the untouchables from His lowest portions and that there was a great difference between the head and the foot ! Such was the state of affairs before the emergence of Islam with its guiding light over the whole world and all human beings. Merit and distinction were assessed on the ground of race, religion, ancestry, money and the number of children !

Although Islam enunciated brotherhood among all believers and honoured all human beings irrespective of

their difference in race, nationality or colour, it also proclaimed the freedom of creed in compliance with the Almighty's Saying : "*Let there be no compulsion in Religion. Now is the right way made distinct from error*" and "*But if the Master had pleased, verily all who are in the earth would have believed together. What ! wilt thou compel men to become believers?*"!

The result of this is the respect we know for the creeds of the people of the Book, and the command to treat them kindly, justly and benevolently and to safeguard their freedom to keep up their devotions and rites as long as they stay with us in any Muslim country.

Likewise, Islam also enunciated the freedom of thought and opinion. The result of this freedom is the emergence of a large number of Islamic views and ideologies in the fields of intellect, knowledge and learning, and even in that of the Islamic doctrines and jurisprudence (Fiqh and Shari'a). Thus, there is no interdiction of the freedom of thought, nor oppression of the thinkers. And if such interdiction happened on very rare occasions, it was made against the rules of Islam.

PART II

ISLAMIC MONOTHEISM

GOD'S MERCY AND CLEMENCY

CHAPTER ONE

MUSLIM THEOLOGY (Al-Tawhid or Al-Kalaam) AND ITS DEVELOPMENT ITS CRITIQUE, ITS VALUE, ITS METHODOLOGY

Muslim speculative theology, is based on the belief that there is one and only one God who has no associate in his attributes, self or deeds. He has sent prophets to direct all humanity to the way of good in this world, and in the next. He questions man about his wordly deeds, awarding or punishing him for his good or evil deeds.

In Islam *Al-Tawhid* is that branch of theology which studies religious and related dogmas and which man can reach through reason and intuition. Thus *Al-Tawhid* is the science that defends these dogmas and replies to those who deny them or differ or deviate from them.

Al-Tawhid rose in Islam just as it did in the other religions and preceded it, in answer to certain factors necessitating its existence. Circumstances were later to ensue that called for a further development within that science. For like other branches of knowledge it was not complete at the moment of its birth. During its first stages it covered a limited area which was, according to the law of evolution and advancement, to expand, gradually covering a progressively wider area, which was to be

influenced in its development by many factors which in their turn helped it to grow and develop till it finally reached the degree of completion in which it stands before us to-day. These factors can be divided into three groups; first there are those that stem directly from the Qurân and from the precepts of the Prophet; the second group is related to the influence of men of different nationalities who were to join Islam later, bringing with them their own mental and cultural backgrounds; and the third group goes back to the influence of Greek philosophy and other philosophical systems which were carried over to Islamic culture.

The Qurân which is the first book to be written in Islam invites the individual to thought, to intellectual perception and sensuous observation, while at the same time it depreciates sheer imitation, especially in the sphere of religious belief. That is why Muslims found themselves obliged to submit to intellectual examination of both the Qurân and the precepts of the Prophet which came to support and explain it. In such a process they were helped by the Prophet himself to understand whatever problems they brought before him.

The death of the Prophet brought with it the problem of the Caliphate, especially after the affliction that had befallen both Osman and Aly and gave rise to deep discord and dispute which in their turn called for a solution of their differences.

Muslims differed as to who was to be their Imam and the rightful leader of Islam, and also upon the conditions that were to accompany that leadership. In this they were divided among themselves. There were the Shiites, who would limit the caliphate to Aly and his descendants, the

Kharijites and with them the Mu'tazilites who would elect for Imam he who was most fit to be one, were he slave or non Arab; while the Mu'tadilites, the third group and the greatest in number, saw that the one fit to be Imam was to come from Quraish. They were backed in their attitude by the words of the Prophet : "*The Imams are to come from Quraish*", especially when the authenticity of those words came finally to be established.

After the death of Osman, Muslims differed much among themselves as to the denotation of "mortal sin" and upon whether it impairs one's faith, rendering one an infidel. This in its turn led them to a division of opinion upon the significance of "true faith", its denotation and explanation. Such a division saw them cleft into three sects — The Kharijites, The Murj'ites, and later The Mu'tazilites.

Thus we see that the political division that came into existence among the Muslims was to develop into a religious one, becoming one of the significant problems of monotheism. It is in this manner that the problem of the doctrine of the Imam or the Caliphate came to be placed within the realm of this science despite the fact that it is more fit to be classed within jurisprudence as it deals with a practical rather than with a religious problem. For in short, it is a question of the fitness of whosoever is chosen to manage the affairs of Muslims, rather than a question of faith dealing with any of the bases of religion. But as some Islamic sects held notions about it which were most likely to lead them to a refusal of many of the precepts of Islam, men who upheld *Al-Tawhid* as their creed attached the Caliphate problem to this field of study. For then it could best be investigated in an atmosphere which was detached from any

fanaticism or prejudice, and an atmosphere which could enable them to distinguish between right and wrong, and so finally to protect true religious beliefs.

Islamic conquests and expansion were followed by a period of stability. Numbers of people who believed in a god other than Muhammad's, or in some deity, and were converted to Islam, others who continued to practise their own religious beliefs — all continued to live side by side with Muslims, bringing into discussion their former beliefs and at the same time engaging Muslims in their debates. This was followed by the translation of old philosophies together with the deep thought-engaging problems it raised.

Thus it was that through such a channel and others that many problems came within the field of the science of *Al-Tawhid*.

Some of the problems centre round the divine qualities of God, the relation between God and man, or the question of free will; others relate to revelation and the need for apostles and prophets, while the remainder deal with other known philosophical problems.

For these reasons and for others, into which we need not go here, we find Muslims intent on understanding the verses of the Qurân and the precepts of the Prophet which centre round these problems. Such verses and precepts are consequently analysed to vindicate their interpretation in the way that we shall show in the course of our study. All such analysis has finally gone to form a solid part of the science of *Al-Tawhid*.

But when the atheist danger grew more intense and intent on spreading among Muslims misleading views, to-

gether with its translation into Arabic of books on polytheism and treatises built on false statements, men of monotheistic learning set themselves up to refute those treatises and views. In the foreground and leading this counter-reaction came a distinguished group of sunnite and Mu'tazilites who set out to write pamphlets and books that still stand in high credit.

ITS CRITICISM AND VALUE

When Muslims came into contact with the Greeks and had their books translated into Arabic, they proved voracious readers. Some of them were able to profit from these books in a way that proved healthy for their religious creed, strengthening all the more the lines of their thought and morals; others who gave free rein to their minds, saw no limits to thought except those of logic which could lead right or astray.

But often the deep contact that *Al-Tawhid* or *Al-Kalaam* made with philosophy had a bad influence upon Islamic Doctrine, which caused religious men to resent it and set them to warning the common man away from it. It was, however, to be carried by some to sheer exaggeration.

And in this connection we would refer to Imam Shafii as quoted by Ibn el-Gouzi (d. 597 H.).

"Would that man be afflicted by all that God has prohibited — except polytheism — than have a look at *Al-Kalaam*" (1).

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(1) Ibn el-Gouzi, **Talbis Iblis**, Renaissance, 1926, p. 82-3.

The same reference quotes the words of Ahmad Ibn-Hanbal:

" He who practises *Al-Kalaam* meets with nothing but failure; all who do so are but infidels. "

In his book Al-Maqurizi (d. 845 H.) mentions in a chapter which he devotes to trace the development of Islamic doctrines till the spread of the creed of Abou el-Hassan el-Ash'ari, that the leading figures of Islam, seeing that many had come to adopt the Mu'tazilite innovation, forbade the adoption of that creed discrediting at the same time this *Kalaam* and disowning all who practised it.

At the end of the same chapter Al-Maqurizi says "This is a summary of the basic principles of this creed (i.e. Al Ash'ari's), which has been adopted by many in the Islamic countries; whoever contradicts it, does this at the expense of his own life. "

About a century later or so, we find Tash Kubra Zada (d. 962 H.) stating that a great number of contemporary scholars were heavily criticizing those who devoted their powers to the study of *Al-Kalaam*. For that purpose he saw it incumbent upon him to differentiate between *Al-Kalaam* which came to be mingled with philosophical views that did not convene with either the Qurânic precepts or with the Sunna, and *Al-Kalaam* which remained, in its central issues, essentially based upon the Qurân and the Sunna. It is the first, he concludes, that should be rejected and discredited. (1)

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(1) Tash Kubra Zada, **Muftah as-Saada**, Bk. II, 23 ff.

We, however, believe that the above-mentioned scholars and their like carried too far this heavy criticism of that science, though we still believe that their attitude had some tenable ground.

In this connection, and now that we have mentioned these different points of view, I should like to refer to one with which I am in full accord. This is the viewpoint held by Sheikh Hussein Wali, one of the great men of Al-Azhar (d. 1936). The view is given full expression in his book entitled "*Al-Tawhid*". It states that to understand religious doctrine in such a way as to be able to lead and direct to it, it is more fruitful to study the Qurân than books written on *Al-Tawhid* or *Al-Kalaam*. For those latter evolved at a time when a dire need was felt of answering attacks directed at Islam by different sects such as the Dahrites, the Zendics, the atheists and the innovationists. But now that those attacks belong to history there is no need to bring back to life a dead past while at the same time we ignore the attacks that are being directed against Islam at the present moment, attacks that can only be answered through the Qurân itself if the advocate is but to show it in itself as it really is.

It is equally indiscreet for one to waste one's life fighting imaginary opponents leaving untouched the real enemy who is actually blocking all ways before him. Besides, books on *Al-Kalaam* are filled with thick clouds blocking out all guiding light and may end in smothering a firm and rightful doctrine.

We would also add that the proofs which were in the past effective in convincing one or in making him give in, cannot be used in our present era when science has advanc-

ed so much, especially in the field of physical science which cannot believe except in what it can submit to examination and experiment. This group of sciences, however, yield to us undeniably true evidence as to the existence of a high power that has created this world and is directing it according to invariable natural laws — a power without which we can never explain, nor can we understand this wonderful world.

Furthermore, it is not wise to face our young men who have added to this Islamic religious culture a part of the materialist and physical education of the West, with proofs such as our forefathers used in controversies with their contemporaries at a time when religion was in its heyday and had a great influence upon them, and when the physical sciences had not yet achieved their present progress.

It is thus surprising and illogical to spend time arguing with men of old when we feel lack of poise and stability and leave unanswered sects like the Qâdiânites and the Baha'ites with the activities and propaganda they make for their misleading creeds in Europe, America and even in Eastern countries.

Men of Al-Azhar should find a cure for the pest of atheism which its advocates suppose to be based on contemporary knowledge and which, as we see, has spread among most learned men and among young men who have received a high educaton.

I know several of these young men whom I met while they were studying abroad and also here in Egypt and they are all either Muslims or Christians. They say that they could not arrive at a proof for the existence of God, and

that it is within man's reach to explain existence and the universe without having to base his argument upon the assumption of the existence of God. And if you question them about the doubts that stood between them and the certainty of the existence of God, arguing with them through all that you have learnt of books of *Al-Kalaam* you still will not arrive anywhere with them. On the contrary, they would ask you to produce proofs that are based on facts or on the tenets of modern science.

We do not seek through the opinion we are advancing here, to lead away from the study of *Al-Tawhid*, what we aim at is to point out the necessity for the development of that science in general. This we can do by bringing up to date its books, proofs and problems together with the opposing views which we shall set out to answer. It is then that it can become an indispensable science yielding a lot of good through establishing religious doctrine and by guiding those who were led astray. This will be made possible since it is going to fall in with the spirit of the age helping it to solve its problems.

METHODOLOGY

The outline of our method in Islamic doctrine will be as follows :

1. — To follow the method used by the Qurân and by the Prophet in demonstrating these doctrines through proofs that are to lead to intellectual conviction. They are to be proofs that are to give emotional and intuitive satisfaction while making use at the same time of the discoveries which

modern science had made in the wonderful order of the universe. This will render inevitable the belief in the existence of a judicious, all-knowing God who has created the universe and is the organizing principle behind it. Such a belief is both an intellectual and an intuitive necessity which gains the acquiescence of the mind before that of the heart.

2. — To demonstrate the effect of this doctrine despite its multiplicity of versions, in man's soul and in the kind of deeds to which it gives rise. For the value of an all-absorbing doctrine lies in the good work to which it leads, and in the evil and bad deeds it helps man to avoid.

3. — To make a point — when occasion demands — of answering whatever doubt might arise blocking one's way towards the belief in the tenets dictated by religion, and without which a Muslim cannot be so considered. In fact, he cannot be considered a true believer except when his words and deeds emanate from these doctrines.

4. — To circumscribe one's demonstration of these doctrines to concepts which are essential, such as the existence of God, his oneness, his knowledge, will and power; his godly messages and man's need for them; the relation between God and the universe; between God and man and his deeds so that we can decide the degree of man's freedom in choosing his actions, the existence of the other world and what it holds of reward and punishment for man.

In our research we shall avoid all discursiveness, giving it a concentration that is to avoid as much as we can the elaborate arguments of controversialists and of the technicalities of logicians and philosophers.

In these two chapters of the Qurân we read :

"Say, Consider whatever is in heaven and on earth: but signs are of no avail, neither preachers, unto people who will not believe." Jonas, 101.

" Or do they not contemplate the kingdom of heaven and earth, and the things that God has created ? And consider that peradventure it may be that their end draweth nigh ? " Al Araf, 185.

In these verses we are rightly directed to where man is to look for evidence for the existence of God. Through his senses, mind and thought man is likewise to approach and understand both the animate and the inanimate worlds. Through them he is to ponder over the wonders of the creation of the universe and the laws that direct and render exact its motion, and to contemplate the wonderful pattern behind both the life of animals and plants with their various species and kinds. It is then that he is convinced that the existence of such phenomena is not incidental but is the result of a deliberate act of creation having behind it an all-powerful, judicious God.

In this connection we should like to mention the following verses of the Qurân in illustration of some of the considerations and thoughts upon which God advised man to dwell so that he can arrive to a conviction of the existence of God.

" There are signs of the divine powered goodness in the earth, unto men of sound understanding ; and also in your own selves : will ye not therefore consider ? " The Dispersing, 21-22.

2. *"We formerly created man of a finer sort of clay, afterwards we placed him in the form of a seed in a secure receptacle: afterwards we made the seed coagulated blood, and we formed the coagulated blood into a piece of flesh; then we formed the piece of flesh into bones; and we clothed those bones with flesh; then we produced the same by another creature. Wherefore blessed be God, the most excellent Creator."* The True Believers, 12-14.

3. *"It is God Who hath raised the heavens without visible pillars; and then ascended His throne, and compelled the sun and the moon to perform their services: each of the heavenly bodies runneth an appointed course. He ordereth all things. He showeth his signs distinctly, that we may be assured. Ye must meet your master at the last day. It is He who hath stretched forth the earth, and placed therein steadfast mountains, and rivers; and both ordained therein of every fruit two different kinds. He causeth the night to cover the day. Herein are certain signs unto people who consider. And in the earth are tracts of land of different natures, though bordering on each other, and also vineyards, and seeds, and palm-trees springing several from the same root, and singly from distinct roots. They are watered with the same water, yet we render some of them more excellent than others to eat. Herein are surely signs unto people who understand."* Thunder, 2-4.

4. *"Now in the creation of heaven and earth, and the vicissitudes of night and day, and in the ship which saileth in the sea, laden with what is profitable for mankind, and in the rainwater which God sendeth from heaven, quickening thereby the dead earth, and replenishing the*

same with all sorts of cattle, and in the change of winds, and the clouds that are compelled to do service between heaven and earth, are signs to people of understanding." The Cow, 164.

Pondering over these words one is led to conclude that this universe — as well as man — was not created by itself. On the contrary it has a strong power behind it that created it of nothingness, giving it the shape which we see and the order which modern science has tried to explain.

In these verses, as in many others there is a strong invitation exacting our intellectual inspection and consideration of the entire universe which we see and know around us. For this is the one way that can lead to a belief in the existence of an all-creative God.

The basic essence of human life lies in a "seed" from which the human body is created with all its bones, flesh, muscles, nerves and veins. They are all parts, each of which has a function of its own, finally combining with the rest in a wonderful cohesion.

Who has caused all this to stem from that initial seed, growing into the differently shaped bones, into flesh, nerves and the rest? Who has given man all these organs and faculties, the absence of which decapacitates man, such faculties as reside in the optic and auditory systems, in the organs of smell and taste, in the blood circulatory system, in the mental and sensorial systems and so on?

All these structures could never have come into existence of themselves, but tell of a highly creative, wise and wilful power. This power is what we designate as God the

able, the knowing and the wise, God who has created all and is the best of creators.

In this connection Imam Al-Ghazali, who is a corner stone in Islamic studies, has said in the fourth volume of his great book "*The Revival of Religious Studies*", that if you look at the picture of someone that has been drawn on a wall and which has become, through the ability of the artist, a close reproduction of the original you will be taken by the skill and artfulness of the painter and by his deftness of hand, all of which are informed by his perfect intuitive power. Your great admiration will not be impaired even when you are made fully aware that the picture is but an artifact made through the use of paint, pencil, hand and wall. Neither will your admiration diminish if you are made aware that a particle of the creative force of these constituent elements does not proceed from the creative ability of the painter but resides in another power. The ultimate perfection of the artist lies in the harmonious unison he creates between paint and background, according to a certain order.

If we look at the world of plants with its different kinds, fruits and uses, we shall see how, despite the fact that they all live in one and the same environment, receiving the same nourishment, each goes on reproducing its own kind, keeping its characteristics whether of colour, fruit or taste.

And the same is true of the "seed" out of which man was created. Throughout its stages of development it develops a form that has poise and balance. Its constituent parts have been subdivided into different particles each having by itself a shape which is made to cohere with the

rest, all finally creating a perfect form. Thus the very bones that go to build up the human body are made to rest both on its inner and outer aspects, on a network of nerves and veins that are so ordered as to be a means of its nourishment and a source of its existence, till they finally grow into man as we know him, with his faculties of hearing and seeing that develop into his capacity for absorbing knowledge and giving it expression.

Thus, when one ponders over the wonders embedded in the marvellous and perfect creation of man, one is in the end led to a belief in God who has created man in a perfect form. Indeed, in all his creation God was ever perfection made real.

The very earth which we see exploited for our own good yields what we need. It serves for us as a resting and sleeping place; we go about in its corners where we want; rain brings life to it after the waste that momentarily seems to envelop it, extracting from it wonderful plants and combining them in a well harmonized pattern. Two trees which grow in one and the same spot and under the same weather conditions are fed by the same source of nourishment and yet despite that each tree brings forth different fruit in kind, colour and taste. Does not all that point to the hand of a wise, all-powerful creator ?

Besides, we find around us many signs that point to the existence of God and of his being the creative force giving existence to this wonderful universe with all that it envelops both on earth, heaven and the intermediary world.

A look at the sequence of night and day that is so harmonized to enable man to have an ordered pattern of

work and rest; a look at the clouds that hang between both heaven and earth with the source of life that they contain within them, bestowing it on earth in the form of rain; a look at the air and heat, the indispensable sources of life — whether human, vegetable or animal — such considerations will enable us to put our fingers on sharp proofs for the existence of God — the powerful, the willing, the knowing and the provident.

Ibn Rushd, the Spanish philosopher, realized that for one to use the creation of the universe and indeed of existence as such, as proof for the existence of God, one would follow the same method used in the Qurân. He also concludes that all that exists is but the work of a power that is perfect in its creation. In his book (1) he has quoted many verses that go to illustrate his opinion; one of these verses is the following :

> " *Have we not made the earth for a bed, and the mountains for stakes to fix the same? And have we not created you of two sexes; and appointed your sleep for rest, and made the night a garment to cover you; and destined the day to the gaining of your livelihood; and built over you seven solid heavens; and placed therein a burning lamp? And do we not send down from the clouds pressing forth rain, water pouring down in abundance, that we may thereby produce corn, and herbs and gardens planted thick with trees?* "

In using these verses as a proof to vindicate the belief in the existence and knowledge of God, and that the universe

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(1) Al Kashf 'an Manahig al-'Addelah fi 'Akka'ed el-Mellah.

proceeds from him, Ibn Rushd says that if one considers deeply these verses one will realize how the constituent parts of the universe are so harmonized as to receive human existence.

For in the beginning God has Himself ordered the beneficial creation of earth in a form that renders convenient and possible our existence upon it. For were it given a size, a form or a position other than its present ones, human life would not have been upon it. All this is illustrated in God's words : *"Have we not made the earth for a bed?"*, and the word 'bed' here gathers with it a harmony in form and position, which is expressed in the peace it creates, added to it a connotation of comfort and softness — all these shades of meaning loaded with this curt statement, a thing that makes one wonder at this compressed yet forceful expression.

In the words that follow — *"and the mountains for stakes"* — our attention is directed to the stability that mountains bestow upon earth; if mountains had been less high than they really are, they would have been displaced through forceful wind and water, and would have been shaken by earthquakes, both leading to the inevitable destruction of life upon them.

Thus the harmony that earth does offer for whatever is to exist upon it has not been haphazardly placed there, but was created through a fully intending and purposeful power. It is a necessity formed to convene with the will of God and according to the shape that he himself has estimated.

In the words that follow — *"We have made the night a garment to cover you, and destined the day to the gaining*

of your livelihood" our attention is drawn to the convenient atmosphere that night and day afford to the world of both animal and plant. For night protects the earth from the rays of the sun just as clothes protect man's body against its burning heat; it also affords all living creatures sleep that brings them rest, the notion of which is contained in the words — *"appointed your sleep for rest"* (the Arabic word that is used for 'rest' denotes the meaning of cessation and this is to stress complete rest that night offers because of the darkness it brings with it) (1).

In the words that follow — *"and built over you seven solid heavens"* — the creation of heaven is referred to as an act of building with the harmony that is to exist among its constituent parts and with the purpose for which it has been created. Both connotations are expressed in the epithet 'solid', which is further made to carry the notion of its capacity for continuous and everlasting movement.

Through all this God points to the harmonious pattern that makes the skies, the planets and their orbits together with their number, form, place and movement cohere with all that which exists on and around earth. So that if any of the celestial bodies stopped for a single moment in its movement, it would, besides bringing to a cessation the whole system, cause disorder to that on earth.

In the words that follow these — *"and placed therein a burning lamp"* — he refers us to the special uses that the sun has for all that which exists on earth, for without its light neither could man nor beast make use of the

(1) This is a note added by translator.

power to see. The capacity that the sun bestows upon man is here singled out because of its most noble uses for man, this of course besides its being indispensable for the life of man, beast and plant.

In the concluding words of these verses — " *And do we not send down from the clouds pressing forth rain, water pouring down in abundance, that we may thereby produce corn, and herbs and gardens planted thick with trees?*" — mention is made of the care that is taken to send down rain at definite periods and in definite quantities to feed animals and plants; such an order which does not rest on chance, tells of the existence of a high power that looks after the good and earthly existence.

From all this we conclude that when all existing objects, whether on earth, heaven or in the sphere beneath them, are well considered and pondered over, this points to the existence of a high power that has created that world according to the wonderful and deliberate pattern upon which it rests.

Since the creating of these objects — the sky, the earth, plants and animals of several different kinds — follows upon a stage of existence when none of them was, and since every existing object that has been created out of nothingness tells of a creative power, we consequently conclude that this power must be God, the willing, the wise and the all-knowing.

Thus the world with the wonderful and the inimitable pattern upon which it rests should be the one convincing proof for the existence of God, who has given it existence. It also should be the correct means which leads whoever

succeeds in understanding it to a knowledge of God. Such an understanding is, however, becoming all the more clear these days.

There no longer remains any excuse for either those who disbelieve or those who doubt in the existence of God and who used to advance as a pretext for their attitude that they can believe only in things the truth of which can be validated through modern science. For science has along its long stages of development discovered many secrets of the world, thus yielding before the balanced and just view of learned men many proofs as to the existence of the Almighty God.

In this connection we should like to refer to a valuable book written by Professor C. Morrison, (1) the book which has been translated into Arabic under the title "Science Preaches for Faith", and is worthy of reading. The author ends his introduction to the book by explaining his aim in writing as that of "throwing light upon the great mystery that now surrounds what is not evidently known to us at the moment; such a light may lead us to the statement of the existence of a more universal, sublime mind, in other words, to the existence of the Creator.".

That the purpose which has moved the author to write his book has actually been accomplished is recorded by the translator of the book in the following comment : "I fully

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(1) He is the former head of the Academy of Science in New York and is head of the New York Institute; he is also a member of the Executive Committee for National Research of the U.S.A.

admire the noble purpose that lies behind the writing of this book. The author aims to prove the existence of God and His oneness through evidence consolidated by proofs drawn from the materialistic modern sciences. Formerly, atheists (in order to validate their standpoint) used to advance what they thought were scientifically based proofs, to the extent that some were made to think that science and faith are two contradictory opposites that cannot co-exist.

" Here we have one of the well-known men of science of America and who has been for some time the head of the American Institute of Science, making a clear statement that modern science goes to prove beyond any possible doubt, the existence of God and ends in the belief in His oneness."

" His book has for its title "*Man Does Not Stand Alone*" and has gone to demonstrate through different proofs drawn from different branches of science, that God is the creator of the universe, his power being behind all things. It is for this sole reason that I took care to translate the book, hoping that it would spread among the Arabic reading public as it did in America, where it had a great influence in resisting the wave of atheism, thus establishing all the more the power of faith. "

The aim that the author sets out to realize in his book is illustrated by scientific proofs all along the various chapters of the book. We shall not try to mention these here, but we should only refer to what has been said in connection with man's system of food digestion. The book states that the stomach, which is the greatest laboratory in the world, receives all the different kinds of food and

drink, where they are analysed into their first chemical elements and particles, making of them a proper nourishment to support the different cells. This is done in such a way that it renders all the living matter which is essential to life present in ordered quantities so as to meet every need which all the cells of the body might present, cells that exceed in number the entire human race.

" Here then is a chemical laboratory that produces more matter than does any other laboratory that was ever built by man's intellect; and here is a system of distribution greater than any other the world has known, where everything runs according to strict order."

Thus if all these wonders run according to a perfect order, and order negates the possible existence of chance, it goes beyond doubt that such an organism must be the work of a perfect, wise and all-knowing creator.

If we look at another of our physical organs and the work it performs like the lens of our eyes, for example, we come to realize the harmonious effort that accompanies such an organ. For the lens receives and refracts the light rays so that they may be clearly focussed on the retina which is a structure at the back of the eye containing rods and cones and which is especially sensitive to light rays.

These particles that go to build the eye into a well-ordered and harmonized structure were similarly brought into existence, and were necessary to give man the capacity to see. Such a process of creation was not performed haphazardly, but was the work of God, to whom nothing

is beyond the pale of his existence, and who has brought to perfection all that he has created. (1)

Besides, the world in which we live has been so well placed with the universal orbit that, had the ocean been a few feet deeper than it presently is, we would have been deprived of oxygen and of the world of plants; and were the globe to slacken in its movement, taking more than 24 hours in its daily circuit, life on it would cease to be.

Thus, if we cast a look at the wonders of the world and nature from all sides and consider them deeply, we soon come to realize that behind every object there is a plan and a purpose that are well carried out according to the will of God. " Since our minds are limited we cannot grasp what is unlimited. Therefore ours must be but a belief in the highly creative power that has created and ordered all objects down to the very atoms, stars, sun and nebulae. " (2)

And in conclusion one is apt to ask what is the use of a religion that believes in the existence of God, and in the faith to which religion invites us, and for the proof of which the Qurân has established sharp evidence based on man's mental power and on the very nature of the universe and its perfect creation ? Is it not enough for man to believe in his own mental capacities through which he was able to master the universe, to reach that stage of knowledge, civilization, and also in his capacities which enabled him to make earth bend to his needs ?

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(1) Look up the treatment of this point in particular in Al-Ghazali : «Al-Ihia», Vol. IV, 314.

(2) «Science Preaches for Faith» P. 186.

Man has widened the scope of his knowledge of both the known and unknown worlds, conquering both space and heaven. But who has bestowed on him these mental capacities through which he was able to accomplish all this ? Is it man himself or another being who is of a more sublime nature than all other beings and has a power above all other things ? It is undoubtedly God, without whom no life could have come into existence, and man would not have been found on earth.

Besides, he who believes in God is one who does not live alone, but he will always find someone to help and support, leading him to the good path, correcting his fault if he ever commits one, directing him to the right way if he falls into perversion, and who finally forgives whoever feels and renounces his own sins, and who helps the needy if he is ever asked.

The belief in the existence of God, and that he is ever near to man to help him and lend him courage, is of a great value that cannot be properly estimated except by men of knowledge and faith. Individual and social virtues, especially the latter, proceed from a belief in God and in eternity and in a better world where man is most fairly rewarded for the good he has performed.

PART III

THE ONENESS OF GOD AND OTHER QUALITIES OF PERFECTION

1. HIS ONENESS

God, who has created this world, is one unified power. The godly power has not, as the dualists profess, a double aspect, one standing for good and light, and the other for evil and darkness. Neither is God, as Christians believe, one of a trinity — a belief that has led man far astray.

The evidence that goes to prove this oneness of God is expressed in these two verses :

1. *" Had they (i.e. heaven and earth) deities beside God they would have fallen into corruption."*

2. *"God hath not begotten issue; neither is there any other god with Him; otherwise every god had surely taken away that which he had created; and some of them had exalted themselves above the others."* The True Believers, 91.

If we assume the existence of more than one God it would then go without saying that each must have a knowledge, a will and a power that can run contrary to those of the other. This would in its turn lead to a difference in the line of action and in the very deliberation of the world and would in the end lead to a deterioration of both heaven and earth, all matter and life, that lie between them. Not only this, but such a conflict between those qualities of each and the results that ensue from them, might rob the world of its very existence. But the universe with its constituent

parts run according to a perfect order, a fact that makes us conclude that the power that gives it creation and existence must be a unified one.

But someone might say, " Can we not assure the existence of several gods who can at the same time agree among themselves that each were to have under him a certain area to control and influence ' ? " Our answer to this would be that we would then be left with more than one universe, each having its own laws and pattern of control But as a matter of fact there cannot be but one universe, the constituent parts of which are so integrated as to run according to the same principles and laws. Consequently the creator is but one and one alone.

And if Islam is a religion that basically rests on the absolute oneness of God who orders us to request — " *Say, God is one God; the Eternal God; He begetteth not, neither is He begotten and there is not any one like unto Him*", it follows that we are to pray for and fear none but him; these two acts being the very heart and axis of the act of worship

Thus we cannot consider as faithful the acts performed by the common layman in soliciting the favour of holy and faithful men, and carrying to their tombs offerings for which they themselves stand in need. Such acts he does in the hope that some wishes of his might come true or that he may acquire some good in this world or the next.

When asking for help to withstand any worldly catastrophe, just as in his worship, man must direct his steps towards God alone. Has not God himself taught us to say in the Preface. " *Thee do we worship, and of thee do we beg assistance.* " And has not the Prophet said, " *If you*

do beg, beg only from Him; and if you do ask for help, ask from Him alone."?

We should not, however, get so confused as not to realize that a visit to the tomb of a holy man soliciting his aid in some good does not run contrary to the doctrine of the oneness of God as long as the pleader's heart abounds in faith in God and in a belief that God is the one active force to bring about whatever he wants, and that the holy man is only a means of interceding with God.

In this connection we should also like to mention another misconception that some people may have. There are some who believe that God may answer the appeal of the faithful, especially as it is mentioned in the Qurân that the prayer or appeal which a prophet or holy man directs to God is most liable to be answered, for does not God say: " *but if they, after they have injured their own souls, come unto thee, and ask pardon of God, and the apostle ask pardon for them, they shall surely find God easy to be reconciled and merciful.*" Women, 64.

We also read in Ibn Saad's *Al Tabaqqat* that when, in the year 18 A.H., known as the "Ash Year", people turned their back on pilgrimage, a wave of dearth swept over the land, bringing death to both men and cattle. Omar was then the Khalif and he spent some months in supplication, praying God to forgive them and send them rain, as did all the Muslims. One day the Khalif, deeply immersed in his prayers, grasped the hand of Al-Abbas (the Prophet's uncle) and, holding it fast in his, said these words :

" O, Lord, let the Prophet's uncle intercede in my supplication to you and send us rain. " Al-Abbas remained beside Omar and with tears filling his eyes, joined him in his

prayers. Shortly after, the rains came and the skies poured down their rain for many days.

Thus we see that a true believer in God the one and only, and who can overhear whispered secrets, should make his prayer direct to God, letting none intercede for him. Omar called upon Al-Abbas to intercede for them, yet he kept on with his own prayers. We say this to rule out as irreligious the visits which people pay to the tombs of holy men, promising them offerings if their intercession to God answers their prayers. Does not God say :

1. "*When my servants ask thee concerning me, verily I am near; I will hear the prayer of him that prayeth, when he prayeth unto me.*"

"*Is He not worthy Who heareth the afflicted, when He calleth upon Him, and taketh off the evil which distressed him.*" The Ant, 62.

The belief in the oneness of God leaves also a great imprint on the hearts and souls of men and consequently upon their deeds. If man is faithful to God alone, and if he fears and pleads to none but him, soliciting him alone to bestow upon him whatever is good and to save him from ills — if man does that he is consequently rendered strong in himself, becomes capable of upholding truth and would in all that which concerns him depend on God alone.

To pray to be near God can only be realized if one carries out God's demands (that is by giving full support to his decrees and those of his Prophet), and if good is bestowed upon all believers in his faith. In the Prophets words — "*Never has one come close to me as through the fulfilment of my precept, and often would he seek that proximity*

through supererogative prayer till he gains my love ... if he asks, I give him; and if he calls for me, I readily answer his call."

It is thus evident that to God pertains all qualities of perfection, or else he would never be the power that creates and deliberates over the entire world. Among the qualities that pertain to him are :

Life, hearing, seeing, speech, knowledge, will, power in all of which has been conceded to God by all men of the Islamic faith.

2. LIFE

God is the source of life, endowing every living creature with it. It thus follows that he cannot but enjoy this gift in its fully perfect form. In the Qurân God is referred to in these words.

" *God ! There is not God but He; the living, the self-subsisting; neither slumber nor sleep seizeth Him.*" The Cow, 255.

He is being in its highest form of existence which must but be, this is in itself a quality that cannot be given him by a power, outside him.

His being lies in his very divine essence which is the intrinsic quality of his existence as the creative power from which the entire universe has proceeded. He is the source of all existing beings which we feel, see and know and also beings that we do not know.

He creates life out of death, bestows life upon earth after death. If He is the life-giving source bestowing it upon

every living creature, then he himself is the perfect image of life. He is eternal and everlasting; he is above sleep or dozing, and above tiredness or fatigue — things which come over other living creatures. Also, because his existence cannot but be, he consequently ranks above all other beings and is perfection incarnate. From this it logically proceeds that he should have perfect living qualities which convene with this high degree of existence.

3. SEEING AND HEARING

For the creator to be perfect and wise in his creation, his power to conceive all that he makes or creates must be all-embracing. This presupposes his possession of all means of conception. Thus hearing and seeing are among the attributes of God, the full attributes without which he would not be the perfect creator, neither would he be the one, and only one, who is to be truly worshipped.

In this light we should mention the words of Ibrahim to his father — " *Father, why do you worship that which does not see nor hear, nor does it avail you in the least ?* ". *Mariam, 42.*

This is to indicate that the worshipped God must have those powers, which has been stated in several other verses, such as the following :

1. " *and God hath heard your mutual discourse; for God both heareth and seeth.* " The Chapter of the Women Who Disputed, 524.

2. "*What thinkest thou of him who forbiddeth our servant, when he prayeth? What thinketh thou, if he followeth*

the right direction? or command piety? What thinkest thou, if he accuseth the divine revelations of falsehood and turn his back? Doth he not know that God seeth?"
The Chapter of Congealed Blood, 585.

We would also mention in this connection the words with which God addressed Moussa and Haroun when *He* sent them to Pharaoh —

" Go ye to Pharaoh, for he is excessively impious; and speak mildly unto him; peradventure he will consider. or will fear Our threats. They answered, O God, we fear lest he be precipitately violent against us, or lest he transgress more exhorbitantly. God replied, Fear not, for I am with you; I will hear and I will see."

And finally we mention these —

" God will know the deceitful eye, and that which their breasts conceal; and God will judge with truth; but the false gods which they invoke besides Him, shall not judge at all; for God is He Who heareth and seeth."
The True Believer.

4. SPEECH

Speaking is an act through which the speaker expresses to the addressee what passes within himself; such an expres sion takes the form of words, either spoken or written. If man, who is not himself a true creator and initiator of an action, can do this, it is all the more reasonable to believe that God, who is the true Creator and initiator, is to be qualified with the power of communicating through the word whatever he wants to express.

But as in the other qualities so it is with this one, there lies a great difference between the divine and the human power over them. Man expresses himself in either the spoken or the written word. But the word of God takes the form of inspiration and revelation created in the soul of whoever he chooses; it also takes the form of words that are created in his addressee, and in the form of an angel or a spirit whom he sends to whoever he chooses of his prophets or apostles. All this has been referred to in these verses —

> " *It is not fit for man that God should speak unto him otherwise than by private revelation, or from behind a veil, only his sending of a messenger to reveal, by his permission, that which he pleaseth; for he is high and wise.* " The Chapter of Consultation, p. 472-51.

In his book, *Manahig el-Addelah*, Ibn Rushd says that the words, "from behind a veil", mean speech that takes the form of words created by God *Himself* in the heart of whom *He* places high by addressing him. This is the favour shown to Moses and is recorded in *The Women*, "*God spoke to Moussa*", and in *the Cow* he says —

> " *These are the apostles, We have preferred some of them before others; some of them God spoken unto (1), and hath exalted the degree of others of them.*"

Thus a Muslim should believe that seeing, hearing and speaking are attributes of God, for besides these being facts recorded in the Qurân, our minds also conceive God as the true and perfect God. At the same time man must not

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(1) As menioned by al-Qurtobi in his interpretation. The reference here is to Moses.

conceive of God as possessing the human physical organs by which these powers could be exercised, such as ears, eyes and tongue. Beyond that man may not go.

For to conceive a belief in these divine qualities in that simple and uncomplicated way, as did Muslims in the godly generation of early Islam, would convince us to follow suit and adopt their view that God is the all-hearing and all-seeing power; that it is He Who has, through his words and inspiration to His prophets, led us the right way, and that He is eternal and everlasting.

It is clear that to believe in these divine qualities does have a great influence upon man's life and work. Thus we should depend and rely on God, for He is the everlasting power; fear Him in whatever we do or say, for he is seeing and hearing; be grateful to Him for it is He who had led us in the right way through the inspiration he bestowed upon His prophets; besides, to be grateful is a source of bounty, for as God says — "*If you be thankful, I will surely increase My favours towards you.*" Ibrahim, 7.

5. KNOWING, WILLING, POWER

These are the remaining qualities that a Muslim should attribute to God. All are necessary attributes to the divine quality, and dictates the view that God's existence cannot but be, and that it is He Who has created the entire universe according to the most perfect and fine designs and principles,

Knowing: That this is a divine attribute is fully certified in many a verse of the Qurân, which all point out that God overhears secrets and private discourse, knows what lies

in the hearts and wombs, in heaven and earth. Knows all that was, is and will be. In this connection we mention these verses :

1. *"He knoweth whatsoever entereth into the earth, and whatsoever cometh out of the same and whatsoever descendeth from heaven, and whatsoever ascendeth thereto."* Sabaa, 4.

2. *"He knoweth whatever is in heaven and earth; and* He *knoweth that which ye conceal, and that which ye discover."* Mutual Deceit, 4.

3. *"Dost thou not perceive that God knoweth whatever is in heaven and earth ? There is no private discourse among three persons, but* He *is the fourth of them; nor among five, but* He *is the sixth of them, neither among a smaller number than this, nor larger, but* He *is with them, wheresoever they be; and* He *will declare unto them that which they have done, on the day of resurrection; for God knoweth all."* The Woman Disputed, 7.

4. *"Thou shalt be engaged in no business, neither shalt thou be employed in meditating on any passage of the Qurân; neither shall ye do any action, but We will be witnesses over you, when you are employed therein Nor is so much as the weight of an ant hidden from thy* Master *in earth or in heaven; neither is there anything lesser than that, or greater, but it is written in the perspicuous book."* Jonas, 61.

These verses do afford the believer in God and the Qurân with a faith that God is all-knowing. As for the unbelievers, we can refer from to evidence extracted from modern natural science and which is undoubtedly convinc-

ing. The Qurân refers equally to this evidence, in these verses —

> "*Either conceal your discourse, or make it public;* He *knows the innermost parts of your breasts. Shall* He *not know all things* Who *hath created them; since* He *is the sagacious, the knowing?*" The Chapter of the Kingdom, 545.

In the second verse we find a reference to the fact that this world, earth, heaven and all intervening matter co-exist within a harmonious pattern that so fits its constituent parts one with the other as to perform the purpose that informs the pattern as a whole. Such an order evidently tells of a creator or maker whose knowledge is all-comprising, and consequently it is knowledge existing on a level which is perfect, an attribute which renders God's knowledge eternal, standing above change.

In this manner we read Ibn Rushd in *Manahig al-Addellah :*

" The proofs that should be advanced for the establish ment of the attribute of knowledge to God should rest on evidence that is to appeal both to the common man as well as to the learned, despite the fact that the latter is distinguished by his more perfect degree of knowledge which can penetrate to the perfect pattern behind the universe and to the purpose which each part has been created to fulfil. "

" Besides, we have, when speaking about the evidence that goes to prove the creation of the universe according to a perfect order behind it, advanced evidence for the existence of God who by definition exists and has created to perfection the universe. This goes also to support the fact that

his knowledge is existing. Yet we shall better quote here Muhammad Abdou who says in his *Risalet al-Tawhiid.*" (1)

Among the evidences that goe to prove the existence of God is the consistent and precise pattern behind all creation, each constituent part being rightly placed in relation to all that it needs for its persistent existence. Such a pattern is to be seen everywhere in earthly and heavenly bodies, irrespective of their size. The link and consistent relation between stars and their organized movement within their fixed orbits is such that the slightest aberration would upset the whole pattern — such an order tells of the perfection and wisdom of its maker.

This deliberating power we see in all creations around us. Consider how plants and animals are so constructed as to seek and extract what ever they need of nourishment. Plants for instance are given a natural drive to lean or to stretch for their nourishment. They are given a natural power to extract what goes to feed them so that if two different kinds of plants, a bitter one like the colocynth, for example, and a sweet one like a watermelon are planted side by side we shall find that each extracts different nourishing elements from one and the same soil.

As for the creation of man, a look into that process along its different embryonic stages and its further development after birth points to the deliberate changes so made as to prepare man to face his surroundings and then to master them.

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(1) **Risalat al-Tawhid,** 8th ed., El-Halabi, Cairo, 1357. pp. 36-8.

Such patterns in all creation cannot be directed by mere chance, but tell of a deliberating power behind it, a power that is all-knowing.

God is the source of all creation. He has created what we know and what we are yet to know. He is the incarnation of will, for it is evident that the active power must be directed in its movement by a power of will — and this in its turn is one of his eternal qualities.

The intrinsic quality of this attribute lies in the fact that it fixes in time and in form the creation of a certain thing. Such a creation (though harmonized to a moment that is temporal) proceeds from a source that is eternal in both power and knowledge.

After advancing this logical affirmation of the divine attribute of will, and after looking in its working we find in the Qurân many verses that point to its existence :

1. " *And when we wish to destroy a town, We send Our commandment to the people of it who lead easy lives but transgress therein; thus the word proves true against it, so We destroy it with utter destruction." (The Night Journey), 16.*

2. " *So that your Master desired that they should attain their maturity and take out their treasure, a mercy from your Master (The Cave, 82).*

3. " *Surely Allah does what he pleases.* (The Pilgrimage, 14).

In the chapter of *The Pilgrimage* we read the words — "*God wills whatever* He *wants.*" God's will is absolute, and is to be enacted in the entire universe. He creates what He

wishes and what *He* chooses; none of His creatures has the power of choice in whatever carries the will of God, the knowing and the wise.

The Attribute of Power. It is only evident that God is powér incarnate. For through this attribute He is able to create and bring to nothingness. For He has given existence to all living things according to His knowledge and will. Thus He must be capable of doing what He wants according to His Almighty knowledge. In the Chapter *The Stars* He says that God " *does whatever* He *wishes to* ".

In the chapter of " The Pilgrimage", 6, He says — "*This is because God is the Truth and because He gives life to the dead and because He has power over all things.*"

Thus his power is unlimited; it realizes the object of His absolute power which nothing can obstruct. No wonder He is the one God who has no other beside Him, no higher will than His and no other power to reverse His will, nothing, whether in heaven or earth, can be far removed from His power.

If modern science were able to make man contról the material world, submitting it to the convenience and advancement of man, this was the last resort achieved only through the power of God. Man should place this fact before him so as to realize that this power to discover or to create goes back finally to God Who equally is the very source of the existence of man.

And here we should like to mention this verse from *The Pilgrimage*, Chapter 73-4 :

> " *O people ! a parable is set forth, therefore listen to it; surely those whom you call upon besides God can-*

not create a fly, and should the fly carry off aught from them, they could not take it back from it; weak are the invoker and the invoked. They have not estimated God with estimation that is due to Him; most surely God is Strong, Mighty."

Besides, if God is all-knowing, wilful and powerful, then from his power emanates existence according to the knowledge, will and power — these things have been proved by the intellect and are recorded in the Qurân, which stands above all doubts. It follows that the power to choose what He wants and what He does is one of His attributes For His is an absolute power that towers above all, a power that cannot be forced to do what it does not wish to do.

Thus it is not in the least true what some Islamic philosophers say, echoing the great philosophers by whom they were influenced, that existing things emanate from God without either His knowledge or will. For He is the primal cause of all things and His existence demands that they — created objects — should emanate from Him, for He is ever kind, ever giving and ever active. And if man himself is ever conscious of what proceeds from him and what he wishes to do, God is all the more so. He is all conscious of, and all willing to what He brings about, whether it is creation or negation, giving or deprivation. As is said in the Qurân, *"...and your Master creates and chooses whom He pleases; to choose is not theirs; glory be to God, and exalted be He above what they associate"; "He is all-knowing"; "He does whatsoever He wishes to"; "is all-powerful."*

These are, then the perfect attributes which Muslims have agreed as belonging to God. They place God above the opposites of these attributes and, indeed, above every

other attribute that tells of want or detraction. These acknowledged attributes are knowledge will and power; qualities which do have a great effect upon man and his deeds.

Whoever believes in God and believes that He is all-knowing, fully acquainted with everything, knows our secrets, our intimate talk and that which is hidden in our breasts; whoever believes that should not commit wrong, nor should be harbour an ill for anyone.

Whoever believes that all that happens in this world runs according to God's will and deliberation, that nothing is except what he himself wishes, will feel content when he carries out his duties and will believe that whatever befalls him may be after all to his own good.

He who believes in the power of God, a power that can reach to whatever it wants, whether in heaven or earth, will not despair if any ill befalls him, for relief is ever to follow. He should not feel too much what he sees and comes to know of injustice, for God can punish the unjust for their misdeeds. Nevertheless he should exert all the effort he can to resist injustice, answer aggression and then leave the rest to God.

PART IV

THE JUSTICE OF GOD, HIS MERCY, PROMISE AND THREAT

THE JUSTICE OF GOD, HIS MERCY, PROMISE AND THREAT

Is a Muslim to believe that God, the all-wise, leads to right and leads astray whoever He wishes to? Or must he assert that we should not believe that God neither tempts nor misleads anyone, for if so, it would not convene with any sense of justice?

And does the absolute justice that is attributed to God in the Qurân and which is an asserted quality of His, inevitably lead to the fulfilment of His promise to compensate those who obeyed Him and punish those who disobeyed? Or is God to punish him who He wants, even were he an obedient, good man of true faith; and is He to forgive whom He would ever like to, even if he were a disobedient, guilty man — Can we agree to these statements, since we have accorded God absolute will, power and all-embracing mercy?

We shall attempt in this concluding section of the second part of the book, to go into these two questions which have been a subject of great discussion between men of "*Al-Kalaam*". We shall attempt to make our discussion brief and clear, while at the same time stating the conclusions to which we have arrived as regards these two points in particular (1).

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(1) This is fully explained in our book, **The Qurân and Philosophy**, Cairo, 1958. pp. 110-172.

1. Leading to the right way and misleading.

This discussion is of special importance for it is connected with the nature of God, His attributes and His relation with man and his deed. God has sent His prophets to announce the faith and threaten those who deviate, to invite to the right and true way. How is it then that the Sunnis and the Ash'arites, who form the majority of men upholding the creed of *Al-Tawhid* and of *Al-Kalaam*, go to assert that God directs and leads astray whomever He wishes — an assertion at which we wonder, for how can it convene with the message carried by the apostles and with God's absolute justice ? The Sunnis and Ash'arites hold that view, for it proceeds from the basic tenet of their creed which says that God is absolute will and power. This is the view that decides their writings and their interpretation.

If we look at Al-Tabari; famous for interpreting the Qurân, we see that in explaining this verse : "*God leads astray whom He pleases and brings to the true direction whom He pleases,*" he says that God Forsakes whom He pleases before he reaches true faith, and so God leads him away from the right way; and God also grants to whom He wishes success in lighting upon faith and true direction leading to it.

Al-Razi also gives the same interpretation, both agreeing that God leads into error or into the true direction whom He pleases.

The Qurân affords us with several verses that have led many Sunnis to take this same attitude; for instance the following :

"God will lead to as tray whom He pleaseth, and whom He pleaseth He will put in the right way". "The Cattle," 39.

2. *"We have sent no apostles but with the language of his people that he might declare their duty plainly to them; for God causeth to err whom He pleaseth, and directeth whom He pleaseth."* ("Abraham", 4.

3. *"But the deceitful procedure of the infidels was prepared for them; and they are turned aside from the right path: for he whom God shall cause to err, shall have no director."* "Thunder", p. 243.

4. *"Moreover God will not be ashamed to propound in a parable a gnat, or even a more despicable thing; for they who believe will know it to be the* truth *from their* Master *but the unbelievers will say, What meaneth God of this parable? He will thereby mislead many, and will direct many thereby."* "The Cow, 4".

In their commentary on the third verse they say that it is God who prepares for the infidels the way for what they do, and it is He who debars them from the true direction, both of which inevitably lead into error.

If this is the attitude of the Sunnis, what is that of the Mu'tazilites? These latter we feel take the position of a lawyer who strongly advocates a cause, the truth and justice of which he asserts, yet does not have in his hands decisive proofs to gainsay his adversary. Thus he is unable to bring those before him over to his side, for his adversary has gained their attention through what he has advanced of evidence

which they cannot but believe since they are verses from the Qurân.

Thus we see that these Mu'tazilites do their best to up hold their own creed, which says that God brings to the true direction whosoever deserves it through his faith, and leads astray whosoever deserves it through his unbelief and dissoluteness.

To uphold their own creed and to answer their advers aries they go through all hardships, giving interpretations, sometimes forced ones, to Qurânic verses and to the words of the Prophet which their adversaries have used to vindicate their point of view. This they do to violate the proofs of their adversaries or, at least, to make light of their sig nificance before whoever lends them a listening ear.

They first of all say that God does not lead either to the right direction or into error except he who so deserves through his own deeds. They vindicate this attitude of theirs, which they have accepted and come to believe in, by citing from the Qurân, which declares it in not a few of its verses. They have even gone further by reading that meaning into the other verses which do not state it, making the whole uphold their interpretation.

For instance, in examining the verse from the chapter of "The Cow", "*He will-thereby mislead many and will direct many thereby; but He will not mislead any thereby, except the transgressors, who make void the convenant of God after the establishing thereof, and cut in sunder that which God hath commanded to be joined, and act corruptly in the earth; they shall perish*" — they conclude that misdirection came to them through their own selves and is not initiated by God.

In this connection Al Quadi Abdel Gabbar, who is a well-known figure among the Mu'tazilites, says (1) that we deny that God creates religious perversion through His creating of religious infidelity and disobedience and by creating a will for it, but we do not deny that He misleads those who deserve being led into error through their own disbelief and transgression.

In the very verse we have just quoted we find what goes to support our view, for He says, "*He will not mislead any thereby, except the transgressor.*" This is equally stated in this verse :

> " *A part of mankind hath He directed, and a part hath been justly led into error.*" "Al'Araf, 30".

and is further illustrated in the words that follow :

> " *they have taken the devils for their patrons besides God.*"

The same meaning we came across in " *God leads into error the wicked*" "Ibrahim, 27"; in other words it is the wicked who are misled by God. In *Jonas*, 9, we read — " *But as to those who believe, and work righteousness, their Master will direct them because of their faith.*"

In *The True Believer*, 28, we find — "*verily God directeth not him who is a transgressor of a liar.*" (2).

This is an example of the interpretation that the Mu'tazilites give to these verses and to similar ones, an interpretation which we think is the true one or the closest to it."

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(1) **Tanzih al-Qurân aan l-Maa'ne**, Cairo, p. 15.

(2) In the same chapter, 34 — «Thus doth God cause him to err who is a transgressor and a sceptic.»

Now, after exposing very briefly these two contradictory attitudes, we should like to ask what is our own attitude. We formulated that in a book years ago after deep research (1). We shall, however, give a summary of it here.

We have come to the conclusion that the Sunnis and the Asha'rites made a point of asserting that God is absolute both in power and freedom; that He is free to do whatever He wants in the way He wants; or else He is no true God. The Mu'tazılites, as we have seen, make a point of proving that God, to be a true God, must be absolutely just as well as absolutely powerful and free. And both sides go to find what supports their views both in the Qurân and in intellectual consideration.

From our point of view we consider that a God who is limited in will and power cannot be but an incompetent one; and at the same time, a God who is conceived as unwisely absolute in will and power is a tyrant that brings no good to the world.

There remains before us then to conceive of God as just and that through him the world is put right; he is a God who through his wisdom, eternally decreed that the universe with all its races, kinds and existence, is to follow a definite pattern. Since God supplied man with a reasoning power to direct him to truth in whatever crosses his path in life, and since man is to be questioned in the next world as to his deeds in this one, God is to interfere only to a limited degree in the works of man.

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(1) **Qurân and Philosophy.**

In other words the true, wise God is he who establishes through his own self some limits to his will and power, according to what he sees and estimates as wise, and according to what he knows of the capacity of all whom he creates. Thus each man reaches the wrong or right way through his own natural readiness and through the fact that he follows either the dictates of his reason or his feelings. Thus each man is made fit for the destiny he has chosen for himself.

Consequently man is truly responsible for his deeds. God has limited neither the power nor the ability of anyone, thus he is truly and absolutely just when he rewards or punishes man for what he has done during his life.

However, man, despite the feeling of freedom, will and power to carry out any action, still cannot be considered its creator in the sense in which the word is used when it is attached to God the all-creator, who is able through his own self to create everything which he has eternally willed.

Man directs and prepares himself for whatever act he wants through his will, then he performs it through his power. But this will and power have been created in him by God according to the manner which God has eternally known was to be adopted by those things and acts in their process of realization.

Consequently an act takes place according to causes placed within it by God. These causes are — as we said will and power which man feels and to which God has directed man either for good or for bad.

We might look at the question differently, and say that had God wished man's deeds to be of his own creation, things would have run according to his own wish; but God

himself wished that man should be the sole agent of choosing and shaping his own deeds.

There remains another question yet. We have seen that many verses of the Qurân explicitly state that God leads to the right direction or into error whoever he wishes How can we say then that it is man who leads right or astray his own self, and how are we going to interpret these verses ?

We can rightly go far with the Mu'tazilites who see that man is the cause of leading himself either to the right or wrong direction. This he arrives at through lending a listening ear to the words of God and obeying his right-leading tenets, or by abstaining from these tenets despite the fact that he is capable of heeding the best of what he hears and then falling in with it.

We have already introduced some verses which the Mu'tazilites have used to illustrate their creed and which brought out two points; first, to attach to God the attribute of leading into and away from error, and, second, to show that the motivating force leading to either of the two lies in man himself. From this follows the fact that man is the sole factor in leading himself to what he has acquired either of this or that.

We can also mention other verses that bear the same meaning :

1. "*Surely God does not lead aright the unjust.*" "The Narrative, 50".

2. "*Surely God does not lead aright the transgressors.*" "The Hypocrites, 6".

3. *" So that he may make what the devil casts a trial for those in whose hearts are hard; and most surely the unjust are in a great opposition; and that those who have been given the knowledge may know that it is the truth from your Lord, so that they may believe in it and their hearts may be lowly before it; and most surely God is the Guide, of those who believe, into a right path."* "The Pilgrimage, 53-54."

It is only right, and falls in well with a right reading of the Qurân, that the verses which mention the causes leading man right or astray as decreed by God, should be the source on which we should lean to prove our point, and we should according to this meaning interpret the other verses that do not explicitly state it. In other words it is up to be rightly or wrongly directed. And God is all justice when He questions and rewards him.

We can thus say that the presence of evil men who have been led astray, points to the existence of men of a difference in readiness to accept or avoid what leads to the right direction, and not to an injustice or a forcing from God. In other words we find that one and the same question may lead some to the right way while it may mislead others: this is so according to the receptivity or the aversion in man to either good or bad.

A further look at the following verses :

1. *" And we reveal of the Qurân that which is a leading and a mercy to the believers, and it adds only to the perdition of the unjust."* "The Night Journey, 82."
2. *" It is (i.e. Qurân) to those who believe a guidance and a healing, and as for those who do not believe, there is a*

heaviness in their ears and it is obscure to them."
"Are Distinctly Explained, 44."

3. *" And wherever a chapter is revealed, there are some of them who say: Which of you has it strengthened in faith? Then as for those who believe, it strengthens them in faith and they rejoice. And as for those in whose hearts is a disease, it adds uncleanness to their uncleaness and they die while they are unbelievers."*
"The Immunity, 124-5."

The meaning behind these verses is very clear. God the wise and the just decrees for each the fate that he deserves according to what he does out of his own free choice and according to his readiness; in other words, God makes it easy for each to become what he himself has willed for himself.

We should, however, say in conclusion that if we judge that action proceeds from man according to his will and capacity, yet we have seen that it is God himself who has created that will and capacity in man, and that He is all-knowing and wise and has accorded to each thing its eternal value. If He keeps away from man his fate He only does so to make man feel his own freedom in whatever he does or from whatever he abstains, and to make man in the end responsible for what he does.

Despite all that, none can either know or precisely limit the extent of God's inevitable fate. In the same manner, none can limit the extent of man's will and capacity which he readily feels in the very act that he undertakes. The knowledge of this limit we refer to God alone. We do not believe that to know it is essential to build up man's religious

feeling, and consequently we should stop at this limit and not attempt to go beyond it.

2. THE MERCY OF GOD, HIS PROMISE AND THREAT

As regards this question we find that the books of *Al Tawhid* and of *Al-Kalaam* all agree that the Sunnis or the Ash'arites believe that nothing should be exacted from God — no reward for the obedient, nor punishment for the disobedient. This is completely left to God's will; He would punish or forgive the disobedient. All that is left completely to God alone.

In this connection we read Abu al-Ma'ali Abdel Malik ibn Youssef el-Guani (d. 478 H.), — "Reward as seen by the true believers (and he means by this the Sunnis) is not decided according to an inevitable right or to a definite reward. It is rather a favour shown by God. Punishment is not inevitable; still whatever punishment befalls man is to be seen as an act of heavenly justice. Whatever reward God promises or whatever punishment he threatens is ever to be regarded as true and rightful."

His student, Al-Ghazali, who is a cornerstone in Islam, says that if God demands an act from man the latter's obedience cannot then call for reward. In this instance God is free to reward or to punish men; if He wished He would, after death, not bring them back into being for judgement.

He does not care whether He forgives all the infidels or punishes all the true believers. This is not beyond God's power, neither does it contradict any of His divine attributes.

This is so because God's demands are a means of decreeing the fate of his men, and reward is a pure favour.

From this we conclude that reward and punishment belong solely to God. His reward for obedience comes as a favour that is not exacted from Him, while His punishment for a disobedience is an expression of His justice. None has a right upon Him, all are but His and consequently He has full right to deal with them as He wishes.

This goes to form the basis of the Sunnite or the Ash'arite creed. They substantiate it with many verses, of which we shall mention these :

1. "*Your Master well knoweth you; if he pleaseth, he will have mercy on you, or, if he pleaseth, he will punish you.*" "The Night Journey, 54."

2. "*He will punish whom he pleaseth, and he will have mercy on whom he pleaseth.*" "The Spider, 29."

3. "*Say, is this better, or a garden of eternal duration, which is promised unto the pious?*" "Al-Forkan, 25."

4. "*From whomsoever it shall be averted on that day, God will have been merciful unto him.*" "The Cattle, 16."

Thus it is up to God to show clemency and to torture whomsoever He wishes. Neither reward nor punishment is incumbent upon Him through man's obedience or disobedience, as is clear in the first two verses.

Imam Fakhr el-Din el-Razi, the interpreter of the Sunni and their defendant, mentions in the explanation he gives to the third verse that reward is not incumbent upon

God, for He states that heaven is promised to the obedient as a recompense.

Were it due to them because of their good deeds, God's promise would not have been necessary. For one is apt to get the recompense which falls within his right without the need of being promised it.

In the fourth verse God mentions that he who is on the Day of Judgement freed from torture, reaches that through God's mercy. Thus obedience does not in itself call for reward, neither does disobedience call for punishment; both proceed from the favour of God, His mercy and justice.

As for the Mu'tazilites, they believe, following their principle of justice which is one of their five known principles, that the rewards of the obedient and the punishment of the disobedient if he dies without true and accepted penitance, are both to be given by God. For if it were not so there could be no order and no justice and God's decree of reward and punishment would then fall outside truth — a thing which is impossible to think in connection with God.

This is the Mu'tazilite creed as it has been stated in their books, and in the books of men of *Al-Tawhid* and *Al-Kalaam*, who have taken after them and with the changes that these latter have brought upon the creed. In this connection el-Guaini says :

" The Mu'tazilites state that reward is incumbent upon God, and punishment must fall upon whoever commits a sin and does not repent. Many go to see that punishment is not incumbent as is reward, for one cannot do away with reward while punishment may be avoided as to say the Basrites and other Baghdadi sects," that is, of course, the Mu'tazilite.

The reason that lies behind the big difference between the two sects — the Sunnis and the Mu'tazilites — can be referred back to the difference in their concepts of God.

The Sunnis, seeing that God's will and power are unlimited, say that it follows that none has to have any right or duty upon Him even if it were God himself who has promised in the Qurân to take this right to Himself.

The Mu'tazilites, in considering this question, have regarded God as just; that is, He rightly pays back each for his deeds.

They say also that what God has spoken of must come true, for the all-mighty cannot but be true to His word and the Qurân has spoken of rewarding the obedient and punishing the disobedient.

Whatever might be the origin of this strong difference between the two sects, the Mu'tazilites do, however, find in the Qurân itself many proofs that go to support their creed. God says "I am not unjust towards men" a verse which is explained in these words by Al-Zamackhshari - "God means 'if I punished him who did not deserve punishment, then would I be unjust, nay, extremely unjust'." This means, then, that the obedient should not be punished, but, on the contrary, be rewarded.

We could mention in this connection these clear verses which go to point out the inadequacy of the Sunnis' attitude and which prove the rightfulness of the Mu'tazilite creed, and this of course follows upon the latter's interpretation of them :

1. "*But they who believe, and do that which is right the shall give them their reward; for God loveth not the evil doer*" "The Family of Imran, 57."

2. "*These are the signs of God: we recite them unto thee with truth. God will not deal unjustly with His creatures.*" "The Family of Imran, 108."

3. "*They are filled with joy for the favour which they have received from God, and His bounty, and for that God suffereth not the reward of the faithful to perish.*" "The Family of Imran, 171."

4. "*And it is not attributable to a prophet that he should act unfaithfully, and he who acts unfaithfully shall bring that in respect of which he has acted unfaithfully on the day of resurrection; then shall every soul be paid back fully what it has earned, and they shall not be dealt with unjustly.*" "The Family of Imran, 160."

5. "*And you shall not be denied the reward of the good which ye do.*" "The Family of Imran, 115."

6. "*And whoever shall have wrought good of the weight of an ant, shall behold the same. And whoever shall have wrought evil of the weight of an ant, shall behold the same.*" "The Earthquake, 7-8."

7. "*Verily God will not wrong anyone even the weight of an ant.*" "Women, 4."

From these verses the Mu'tazilites conclude that justice demands that every man should be rewarded or punished for his good or bad deeds. Since God is just and does not favour the unjust, it follows, then, that there is no point in man's subjecting himself to conceit, but he should rest assured that he is to be met with whatever his obedience or disobedience call for.

In his book *El-Kashaaf*, El-Zamack' says that the last verse supplies us with the proof that if obedience is diminish-

ed in the very slightest degree, or if punishment exceeds the disobedience then, in both cases, injustice occurs. And God never commits injustice, not because — as he says — it is beyond his power, but because it is not within his wisdom.

These are examples of how the Mu'tazilites find in the Qurân what proves their creed. But we still must differentiate between two points; first, the punishment of the disobedient and second, the rewarding of the obedient. As stated in their creed the punishment of the disobedient is necessary and this is indicated in the many verses that tell of God's threat of punishment, of which we mention :

1. *" But whoso disobeyeth God, and his apostles, and transgresseth his statues, God shall cast him into hell fire."* "Women, 14."

2. *" But whoso killeth a believer designedly, his reward shall be hell; he shall remain therein for ever;"* "Women, 93."

3. *" And whoever shall have wrought evil of the weight of an ant, shadll behold the same."* "The Earthquake, 8."

and finally,

4. *" But whoever shall have wrought evil, shall be thrown on their faces into hell fire. Shall you receive the reward of any other than that of which ye shall have wrought ? "* " The Ant, 90. "

The Mu'tazilites conclude from these verses and similar ones that he who has committed a big crime and has not advanced a true repentance that has been accepted, must be duly punished. For God has stated that in the Qurân and God's statement is ever true, besides which, He is justice.

Their adversaries may well say that the Qurân has many verses that speak of a promised good and forgiveness — "*God does not forgive worshipping other than Him, but He forgives sins less grievous for whomsoever He wishes.*" Also, "*Good deeds outweigh bad ones.*" They are all verses that are clear in stating that good act may do away with the trace of whatever man has committed of evil, and consequently he cannot be punished for the latter.

This means, says Imam Fakhr el-Din el-Razi, that one should read the verses that speak of punishment through those that promise mercy and forgiveness; this will in itself give the right interpretation and do away with what would otherwise be contradictory in the Qurân.

Besides convention favours the idea that man should abandon threat and be more inclined to forgive a bad deed, whereas not to fulfil promised good or benevolent reward is condemned.

If both the Mu'tazilites and their adversaries from the Sunnis go back to the Qurân and the Prophet's sayings to find proof for their tenets and to build them up, we too have a viewpoint which we shall advance here.

The Mu'tazilites have very much limited the mercy of God when in exacting punishment for the disobedient they went so far as to demand that whoever is to commit a big crime and does not repent is to be forever punished in hell. Such a view shows their complete pessimism, wherein they differ from their adversaries of the Sunnis, who were true optimists and who held fast to these words of God :

> "*Say, O my servants who have transgressed against your own souls, despair not of the mercy of God;*

seeing that God forgiveth all sins; for He is gracious and merciful." "The Troops, 53."

The situation, however, changes when we come to the question of promise of good reward for obedience and good deeds. The Sunnis see that such a reward must but be given, for as the Qurân says, a benevolent deed should be equally rewarded. But the Mu'tazilites see that God is free to reward the good and obedient or to punish him; God's actions are above questioning, since what He is disposing of is rightly His own.

Thus we can say that despite the fact that the Mu'tazilites showed logic in the formulation of their creed when they stated that a good reward necessitates a good deed, yet they do not show the same reaction when they exact the punishment of the faithful who dies leaving behind a grave sin, the repentance for which has not been accepted, and when they exact that that punishment was to see him cast eternally into hell.

What is, then, the dividing line between the faithful and the infidel? How would the Muslim be answered if he on the Day of Judgement says, "How am I who believe in God and have not committed except one sin, to perpetuate in hell as would the infidel?" Thus we see that such an attitude does not fall in with the justice upon which the Mu'tazilites are so keen as to make it one of the five tenets of their creed.

As a matter of fact the Sunnis are justified in their attitude. Thus one should read the verses that speak of threat through those that speak of promise in a way to make them fall in with the promised clemency, forgiveness and mercy.

Nevertheless we believe that all the promises and threats mentioned in the Qurân must, if considered, as it is by the Mu'tazilites, as an announcement of what God has eternally decreed, come true in the next world. But the threat to him who has, for instance, deliberately committed a murder does not, as we said before, fall in with God's justice.

It is not also true to agree with the Sunnis that this is a statement that can bear being right or wrong, but it is an expression that aims at a mere persuasion to good, and a disuasion from committing evil. Neither can this take an actual shape as is the case in a promise and a threat, for this does not befit the all-mighty nature of God.

Thus we see that it falls more in the line of truth, if it is not in itself one, to say that this would fall within the field of legislation through which God aims to make clear the reward or punishment that is to meet the obedient and the disobedient — a thing that should in itself urge men to do good and avoid the bad in this world.

But in the next world man is not expected to act, but to be rewarded for his actions in his earthly life; in other words, it is a place where neither reward nor punishment can be of positive value in inciting man to do good or dissuade him from evil.

Thus God will definitely reward whoever obeys Him for He himself has so promised and none can as God fulfil his promise. In the same way God will duly punish evil not to have man perpetuate in hell for a sin that he committed, however mortal that sin is, as long as death sees him in faith.

God has it within his power to forgive if He so wills it; for the power to show mercy befits, all the more, the kind and the merciful. And how can God be other than this, He who asks those who have committed mortal sins, not to despair of God's mercy, who is all-forgiving and all-merciful ?

Galal el Dwani, who has given us an explanation of *'Aqqa'id 'Uddadiyah*, does arrive to a conclusion which does not depart much in its practical issue form our own point of view. For he says that there are some among the learned who see the probability of God's going back on his threat, a thing which cannot apply to his promise of reward. This view is echoed in the words of the Prophet : " *he whom God has promised a reward for a good deed is to be duly recompensed, but he who has been promised a punishment may receive it or not.* "

El Asma'ii relates that Omar ibn-Ubaid (1) asked Abu Amr ibn el-Ula (2) whether God breaks his promise. Abu Amr replied in the negative, so Omar said, "But would it mean that God breaks a promised threat ? " So Abu Amr answered, "Are you so ignorant that you cannot differentiate between a promise and a threat ? " (3) The Arabs do not hold one in blame for going back on a promise for evil, on the contrary they hold that as a generous and kind gest-

(1) One of the well-known Mu'tazilites, d. 142 H.

(2) One of the seven great linguistic readers, d. 154 H.

(3) [The two Arabic words, wa'ad and wa'id, have the same consonants (w and d) and differ only in the intervening connecting vowel.] translator's note.

ure, but to promise good and then to disregard it - this is the real break.

What Abu Amr has explained here is, as Galal el-Dwani says, the true behaviour of the honourable and the benevolent. In this connection Yehya Ibn Ma'ath says that a promise and a threat are true things; the first lies in what God owes man, assuring him of getting what he deserves for a certain deed; and a threat is what man owes God and God's right over man. God threatens torture to whoever commits a certain deed, if he goes on and commits it then his reward or punishment is left to the will of God, for this is the right of God. But reward, unlike punishment, falls in with the nature of God, who is all forgiveness

Al-Dwani expresses the view we have already stated as regards the verses that bear a promise and those that bear a threat in particular For the latter, he says, are statements that can either be fulfilled or unfulfilled and this according to God's will, mercy and justice. Thus they are not informative statements pronounced by God, which might prove to be false if not realized in the other world. Thus he adds, "Unless the verses of threat would be interpreted as being informative statements in so far as they imply that the threat is rightly deserved, not that it has actually happened." In the quoted verse he says that " hell is his punishment ", that is, he is to remain there everlastingly

Thus in expresssing this view of ours we would be only stating what the Mu'tazilities themselves make a point of emphasizing when they regard that the obedient must be rewarded. Such a reward has been promised by God and none can so fulfil his promise as does God We also draw attention to the fact that it is more likely that God might

forgive some of the disobedient from among the believers. God himself has stated that and He is above going back on his word, neither could the word have been used as a means of threat or encouragement.

Forgiveness for what He himself chooses to forgive is an act that remains His alone, since these verses are revealed to formulate a statement not merely informative which bears being right or wrong. Besides the act of not leaving the infidels eternally in fire, as some of the Mu'tazilites deduce from their rather superficial examination of some verses, approaches to the justice were it not in itself perfect justice — that one must attach to God.

PART V

PROPHECY AND MISSION

CHAPTER ONE

PROPHECY AND MISSION

The verification of prophecy and the missions of the Prophets (May God's blessings be upon them) is one of the concerns of the Muslim theologians or the Teachers of Islam, since this is one of the principles of the Islamic religion. It is essential to believe in their possible occurrence, for all the sound international religions we know of are due to the revelation of the will of The Most High God to those of His servants He chose to be His Messengers to the people.

We will first discuss the verification of prophecy and the divine missions in general, and show the need for them; then we will discuss the need for the mission of the Apostle of Islam, and verify it in such a way that leaves no doubt in the minds of those who are willing to be convinced by the truth when it is clearly shown to them.

— MISSIONS IN GENERAL

Some, or many, people may come to know of the existence of God by reasoning, i.e., by inference, from the existence of the wonders of creation, that there must be an Almighty God, All-powerful, a Creator, All-knowing and Wise; that He must have made them and created them in such a wonderful system with no precedent example.

Many people may come to distinguish between good and evil, virtue and vice through reasoning and conscience, and thus save their conscience from deviation or going astray in judgment, so that conscience may be a good guide and leader when consulted as to what to take or leave.

A nation or a people may enact for themselves laws which they follow in their dealings and in settling the differences that arise between them, including in such laws a penal code that keeps individuals from violating or deviating from them.

Some may perhaps come to realize the necessity of another life after this worldly one, so that the good and virtuous may be rewarded for the good they have done but which has passed unrewarded in this worldly life, and that the evil may be punished for the sins and wrongs they have committed but which have passed unpunished.

Some or all of these conclusions may be attained by some people in certain epochs and circumstances, yet they cannot possibly be attained by all people at all times under all circumstances. For people differ considerably in their aptitudes and mental capacities as well as in their environments, and, besides, life is intricately woven of various circumstances and needs.

All this does not make it possible to know always and for sure what is good and what is evil, and what causes happiness or unhappiness and perdition. Besides, it does enable us to know the nature of happiness and unhappiness, especially in the other life, and what kind of life it will be. No human mind can possibly know, without help or guidance, anything about it.

It is quite evident, then, that man cannot depend solely on his mental power and conscience in acquiring all that he ought to know in respect of God or His attributes, life and the statutes which govern it and which are indispensable for ensuring a good life and the good of all people, and the day of judgement and what it includes of reward in paradise or severe punishment.

In proof of this is the erring prevalent before the time of the Divine Missions, or, even after the messages of the apostles had become blurred in human memory before the appearance of the Prophet Muhammad. At that time many people were still pagans.

In spite of the scientific genius of the Ancient Egyptians, some of them defied the phraohs and others worshipped the calf. Such were the mass of ancient Greeks, who, in spite of their genius in philosophy and knowledge, were pagans. So also were the ancient Romans, despite their great achievements in philosophy, ethics and law. What, then, could be expected from nations other than those well-established in thinking, i.e., nations that were deprived of intellectual abilities and profound thinking ?

Notwithstanding all this, there were peoples who denied prophecy and divine missions, such as the Indian Brahmans who claimed that if what the apostle communicated could be attained through reasoning, it would be futile to send an apostle to teach it; and what was void of a sound aim was vain and foolish; and if what the apostle communicated was beyond the power of reasoning, it could not be accepted, for what could be accepted must be within the reasoning power of minds.

Such an opinion was adopted by some of those who said they had professed Islam but faith had not entered their hearts. One of those was Abul Hussein Al Rawandy (1) who related the Brahman's opinion in the following way

" Brahmans say that they as well as their opponents have been convinced that the mind is the greatest of God's graces to His creatures, that it is through the mind that one gets to know God and His graces, and that, because of this grace, command, prohibition, persuasion and threatening are justifiable.

If the apostle's preaching is a confirmation of what the mind judges to be good, bad, acceptable or prohibited, Brahmans are not bound to consider his call or respond to it, for what the mind can find out makes his call superfluous, and thus sending apostles to preach such things is wrong. If he preaches differently from what the mind sees good, bad, tolerable or prohibited, then they are free from acknowledging and prophecy. "

It is self-evident that this argument is false and good-for-nothing, for the mind cannot get to know everything, as is well known; besides it is a good thing to send apostles to preach what is acceptable to the mind, for this will serve as an explanation and a confirmation of it. The divine mission then serves to assure man that what he has attained or come near to through reasoning is valid.

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(1) He was a learned atheist who debated with some of the Teachers of Islam. He died in the year 245 or 250 A.H. Rawand is a village of Fassan in the neighbourhood of Isfahan.

Yet it is obvious that not every man can attain through his own reasoning alone that God sends an apostle to teach, and that if a person attains some of it, people do not usually follow him, nor yield and comply completely with what he has realized, for he has no proof from God as to the truth of his finding. Whereas an apostle is backed by God with miracles that prove the truth of what he has communicated to the people from God, Lord of the Creation

Prophecy and divine missions are then a favour and grace of God to all people, different as they are in minds and abilities. But for them, mankind would have gone astray, except those whom God protected. With them, God has the right of reckoning over his creatures. This is the reason why The Almighty and Wise God says in the Sura or Chapter entitled " Women ", verses No. 163-165 :

" We have revealed Our will to you as We revealed it to Noah and to the prophets who came after him; as We revealed it to Abraham, Ismael, Isaac, Jacob, The Asbaa', Jesus, Job, Jonah, Aaron, and Solomon. We gave the Psalms to David. Of some apostles We have already told you (how God spoke directly to Moses); but there are others of whom We have not yet spoken: apostles who brought good news to mankind and admonished them, so that they might have no plea against God after their coming. God is Mighty and Wise. "

If prophecy and divine missions in general were in need of a proof after that, the teachers of Islam and the Muslim theologians gave that proof and undertook to explain it most efficiently. They say that it is not of impossible occurrence that God sends human apostles to His human creatures, it is not at all similar to the meeting of opposites

or the change of one element to another (as the change of stone to gold for example). It is not unreasonable that God may command one of His servants to legislate laws for the people and show them how to discriminate right from wrong and good from evil.

It is indeed a grace to the people that The Most High God sends these apostles to them, so that there may be a strong urge for them to have faith in what their minds have attained and the divine mission has confirmed, and to know the other facts that the human mind alone cannot attain.

God is All-knowing, the Speaker and has power over everything. There is nothing to prevent His communicating His will to the people through any of the known means of revelation. Besides, it is natural that the master sends a messenger to his servants. Therefore, this must be possible in connection with God and people, as God owns all human creatures and has the power to communicate to them what He wants to.

It is useful to state here the opinion of the Imam Sheikh Muhammad Abduh, for it is a clear proof in various respects of the possible occurrence of prophecy and divine missions for the whole world and humanity at large. It is even a proof of its actual occurrence, and that they were indispensable for the guidance and good of humanity at large. It is even a proof of its actual occurrence, and that they were indispensable for the guidance and good of humanity. He says in his 'Thesis on Monotheism' :

"Was it not due to the wisdom of the Wise Maker Who directed man the right way on bases of guidance and education and Who created man and taught him self-expression:

taught him articulate speech for mutual understanding and taught him how to write for corresponding, to specialize a certain human rank to which He prepares by His grace some of His chosen servants ? Indeed He knows whom to entrust with His mission.

" He privileges them with sound nature and aids their souls to attain the perfection that renders them fit for radiating with the light of His knowledge, and worthy of the trust of His hidden secret, which if revealed to others, as is revealed to them, they would give up the ghost, or lose their minds at its majesty and greatness.

" They are allowed to behold the unknown by His permission, and know what will happen to the people. In their sublime ranks they are in relation to the two worlds the end of the visible and the beginning of the unknown. They seem not to belong to this worldly life: they are the delegates of the other world but in an attire different from that of its inhabitants.

" Then they are ordered to speak about God's majesty, and about what is hidden from human minds of His Most High State, according to what He wishes His servants to believe in Him, and what He has doomed to concern their happiness in the other world. They should also clarify to the people what they must know of the state of things in the other world, expressing it in a way that is not beyond their mental capacity nor beyond their understanding.

" They should communicate to the people God's general laws which decide the path they should take in setting right their own selves and checking their passions, and teach them the things that lead to their own happiness and unhappiness, in this universe of which the details are hidden from their

consciousness but which their inner conscience is well aware of in general, including all the laws concerning the totality of things whether visible or hidden.

" Then He supports them by signs that are beyond the reach of the human power, so that people may be convinced of the truthfulness of their missions. Thus there will be evidence that they are God's messengers to His creation bringing good news and forewarning.

" No doubt He who created everything in the best form, granted every being its own characteristics, bestowed every living creature with what it is in need of, and extended His mercy to all His creation : great or lowly — no doubt it is a sign of His kindness to the species He created in the best form, and endowed with receptability of knowledge in contrast with the gifts He granted the other species, that He saves man from bewilderment, from wandering astray in the more important of his two lives, and from deviation from the right course in his better state.

" Therefore He chose from among the people individuals to lead to the right choice and show the right way, and privileged them with characteristics in their own selves unshared by others. He also provided them — to be more convincing — with dazzling signs which proved the falsity of what people had premeditated. Then the pretentious felt ashamed, and the unruly was humbled. The unreasonable person's mind was shocked and restored to reason, and the ignorants' sight was dazzled and they averted their eyes from error.

" They moved hearts by God's orders, and astonished minds by the splendour of His signs, thus besieging mentalities by what inevitably led them to yield. In this all peo-

ple were the same: owner and owned, sultan and rascal, wise and ignorant, meritorious and undeserving; yielding to them was a sort of obligation rather than meditative option.

" They taught them what God willed to set right their ways of living and their destinies, and what He willed to be taught about Himself and His perfect qualities. These were the prophets and the apostles.

" Therefore sending of the prophets, may God's blessings be upon them, is necessary to man's very existence, and essential to his very living. It is to man similar to a guiding mentality; it is a favour granted by God's Grace; so that people may have no plea against God after His sending the apostles. "

II. — THE MISSION OF MUHAMMAD

MAY THE BLSSSING OF GOD BE UPON HIM

As it has been proved that God may send to His Creation messengers to bring good news and forewarn, and that He actually did when nations and peoples were in need of them, it is necessarily a proof as well of the mission of the seal of prophets and apostles to the whole humanity. His mission is proved by evidences given in support of the missions in general — evidences that cannot be denied except by a pertinacious antagonistic arguer — and also by the urgent need for his mission which was evident after the previous missions had faded, and the world was lost in bewilderment, out of which it could be saved only by a new comprehensive divine mission, as we mentioned at the beginning of this book.

The Most High God, praise be to Him, provided His previous apostles with miracles, which supported their claim to be messengers sent by the Lord of the Creation, such as the change of the staff into a serpent in the case of Moses, may God's blessing be upon him, and healing the blind man and the leper and restoring the dead to life in the case of Jesus, may God's blessing be upon him. But all these miracles were of a different nature from the divine missions with which all the previous apostles were entrusted.

Whereas the miracle of Muhammad and his proof with which he challenged the deniers of the truthfulness of his mission who were eventually the losers, was of the nature of his claim and closely connected with his mission which God ordered him to communicate to all pepole.

This miracle is the Qurân alone, the Glorious Book that is entirely void of falsehood, for it is not the words of humans, but a revelation from the Lord of the Creation. That is why all the Arabs, eloquent and rhetorical as they were, were unable to compose a chapter similar to the chapters of the Qurân when they were challenged by Muhammad, may the blessing of God be upon him.

Indeed, Muhammad, may God's blessing be upon him, did not set his mission aside challenging his opposers with extraordinary things like those which were brought by his fellow aspostles who came before him, and which were not of the nature of the divine missions. Therefore, when he was asked by his opposers to show them something extraordinary, his only reply was as follows : "*Glory to my Lord! Surely I am no more than a human apostle*". In this connection the following verses from the Sura or Chapter entitled "The Night Journey" may be stated :

" They say : ' We will not believe in you until you make a spring gush from the earth before our very eyes, or cause rivers to flow in a grove of palms and vines; until you cause the sky to fall upon us in pieces, as you have threatened to do, or bring down God and the angels in our midst; until you build a house of gold, or ascend to heaven : nor will we believe in your ascension until you have sent down for us a book which we can read. '

Say : ' Glory to ALLAH Surely I am no more than a human apostle.' "

Though Muhammad, God's blessing be upon him, did not depend on such miraculous things in evidence of the truthfulness of his mission, yet he depended on the Greatest Miracle : The Great Qurân. Indeed it is miraculous enough and a proof definite enough to prove that he is the messenger of the Lord of the Creation.

The inimitability of this " Book ", which proves beyond doubt that it is a revelation of God's will, revealed to the last of His prophets and apostles, is clearly seen when we read it, study it scrutinizingly and understand it fully For then we find in it predictions of unknown things that Muhammad knew nothing about before the Revelation, such as the history of bygone nations and times and the events that took place in those olden times. We should here be reminded that he whom God chose to reveal the Qurân to was illiterate.

In this connection The Most High God says in the Chapter entitled " The Spider " :

" Never have you read a book before this, nor have you ever transcribed one with your right hand. Had you done

either of these, the unbelievers might have justly doubted. But to those who are endowed with knowledge it is an undoubted sign. None deny Our signs except the wrong-doers."

In the Chapter entitled "The Story", The Most Sublime God says in proof that the history of the earlier generatoins stated in the Qurân is revealed by God, and that Muhammad is His apostle :

"You were not present on the western side of the Mountain when We charged Moses with his commission, nor did you witness the event. We raised many generations after him whose lives We prolonged. You did not dwell among the people of Midian, nor did you recite to them Our revelations; for We sent forth to them other apostles.

"You were not present on the Mountain-side when We called out to Moses. Yet We have sent you forth as a blessing from your Master to forewarn a nation to whom no apostle has been sent before, so that they may take heed."

Another proof of the inimitability of the Qurân and its evidence of the truthfulness of the apostle's prophecy and his mission being revealed by God, is that in it are united eloquence, superb versification and a unique style: a style different from all the styles of all the Arabs.

Therefore, on hearing a little of Qurân, the listener's attention was naturally drawn to the fact that he listened to speech unlike that of humans, and that if he gave up obstinacy he would believe in it, prostate himself to it in adoration, and profess it to be the revelation of the will of

the Lord of the Creation to the individual He chose to communicate His mission to all peoples.

The people of the Quraish were lost in bewilderment about Muhammad and what he brought. They conferred and consulted what to do; and they eventually decided to send to him one of their noblemen, Utbah Ibn Rabi'ah, hopnig he might get from him an explanation which would relieve them of the bewilderment they suffered and the distress that perplexed them.

Utbah told Muhammad what he wished to say; and when he finished talking, the Apostle recited to him some verses from the beginning of the Chapter entitled " Revelations Well Expounded ". He returned to his people who asked him " What news have you got, Abul Waleed ? " He replied : " I swear by God I listened to speech that I had never heard anything like before ! By God it is not poetry; it is not witchery, it is not divination !... .. etc. "

It is for a certain purpose that God says to His Apostle in the Chapter entitled " Repentance " :

" *If an idolator seeks asylum with you, give him protection so that he may hear the Word of God, and then convey him to safety.* " This, in our opinion, signifies that the versification and the style of the Qurân are such that when a little of it is recited the listener feels that it is actually different from the speech of humans and that it is the Word of the Lord of Creation.

Besides these two points, namely the news of the unknown and the story of bygone nations, and its versification and style, which are evidence that the Qurân is un-

doubtedly inimitable by any people, or even by humans and Jinns collaborating, and that this is a definite proof of the truthfulness of the Apostle, the verification of his prophethood and the truthfulness of his mission — besides all this we may mention that the philosopher and great judge " Ibn Rushd " adds one more point which was thought of solely by the Teachers of Islam or Muslim Theologians.

Ibn Rushd surpassed them all by what he explained in his " Methods of Evidence ". He states that in order that a miracle may be definitely indicative of the truthfulness of prophethood, it must be compatible with the prophet's mission which is guiding mankind to the truth and justice through the laws he brings forth. This is exactly the same as when recovery from illness is indicative of the knowledge of medicine by him who claims it.

In this respect, the Qurân is considered the greatest miracle of the Apostle, God's blessing be upon him. For the laws it includes concerning knowledge and work cannot be acquired through learning; they are the revelations of the will of the All-Knowing and Most Wise God.

These laws which aim at bringing happiness to mankind, cannot be known except after knowing, and getting in contact with God, realizing the nature of happiness and unhappiness, and the means that lead to the former and away from the latter, and similar matters. All these matters either can only be comprehended, or are better grasped, through the revelation of God's will.

It has been proved that the Qurân is inimitable in all these respects : its relating much of the unknown and the

history of the bygone generations, its versification and style, and its compatibility with the Apostle's mission that was revealed by The Most High God so as to teach the people the laws which, when they follow them and act accordingly, lead to their happiness. As this has been proved, it naturally serves as an evidence of the truthfulness of The Illiterate Prophet in claiming to be the Messenger of the Lord of the Creation.

It is useful to state here another quotation form Professor Sheikh Muhammad Abduh. He concluded his discussion of the mission of Muhammad (God's blessing be upon him), its principles, its contribution to the reformation of nations and creeds, his single shouldering of its responsibility, by saying :

" Could there be a more convincing proof of his prophethood than this one ? An illiterate undertook to call those who knew how to write to understand what they wrote or read, having received no schooling, he urged the learned to look critically into what they knew; from an environment void of the springs of knowledge, he commenced to guide the knowers, brought up among people shrouded with illusion he rose to rectify the crookedness of the wise "

" Stranger as he was in the nearest of peoples to naiveness and the farthest from understanding the systems of the creation and meditating its admirable laws, he undertook to decide for the whole world the principal laws, and plan the roads to happiness, by taking which one would never be in danger and by leaving which one would never be saved ! "

He was but a human being to whom God revealed His will, the last to the series of prophets; but in convincing

people of the truthfulness of his mission, he did not produce anything that dazzled the eyes or embarrassed the senses or bewildered the feelings.

But he urged that every power should work in the line assigned to it. He addressed the mind and resorted to it for judging things to be right or wrong. He made of the power of speech, the force of eloquence and the validity of the evidence the convincing proof and the sign of the truth that could in no way be doubted, and that was the revelation of the will of the Wise and the Praised One.

Moreover, having faith in prophecy, divine mission in general and the mission of Muhammad Ibn Abd Allah (God's blessing be upon him) in particular has effects of value beyond estimation.

It gives man certain knowledge of what philosophers and thinkers have been of contradictory opinions about since the early epochs of history up to the present day, regarding the existence of God, His relation to man in what he does and His guiding him to the good. It fills man's heart and mind with confidence in what The Apostle communicated of facts concerning both the visible and the unseen. These are facts that the human mind alone could not have attained, however sharp and talented it might have been.

It suffices here just to mention the vast differences, in regard to beliefs, principles of good manners and laws, that are between the believers and the other nations and peoples who have remained up to the present day deniers of the prophets' missions and what they communicated of veritable signs, guidance and distinction between false and true.

There is indeed a world of difference between leading one's life guided by the human mind which often goes astray and basing one's beliefs, legislation, manners and behaviour on the divine guidance which was communicated by prophets, and which is absolutely infallible ! No wonder ! For divine revelations and missions are common blessings for all people in every respect of life, and in both this mundane life and the other life.

CHAPTER TWO

RESURRECTION AND THE NEXT LIFE

1. — RESURRECTION

He who believes in the Qurân and that it is the revelation of the will of The All-Knowing and Wise God to His chosen Apostle who does not speak out of his own fancy, no doubt believes that after this mundane life there is another eternal life, when every man will be judged according to his deeds, whether good or evil.

This is plain from God's Book which is abundant in verses indicative of resurrection and judgement. The following are some of these verses :

In the Chapter entitled " Pilgrimage " The Most High God says :

" *That is because God is Truth : He gives life to the dead and has power over all things. The Hour of Doom is sure to Come — in this there is no doubt. Those who are in the grave God will raise to life.* "

In the Chapter entitled " The Believers" He says :

" *You shall surely die hereafter, and be restored to life on the Day of Resurrection.* "

In the Chapter entitled " yasin. " He says :

" He answers back with arguments, and forgets His own creation. He asks : *'Who will give life to rotten bones ?'*

Say : *'He who created them at first will give them life again : He has knowledge of every creature."*

In the Chapter entitled "Al-Ahqaf" He says :

" Do they not see that God Who created the heavens and the earth and was not wearied by their creation, can raise the dead to life ? Yes. He has power over all things."

In the Chapter entitled " The Cow " He says :

" Fear the day when you shall all return to God; when every soul shall be requited according to its deserts. None shall be wronged."

He says in the Chapter entitled " Aal - Imran" :

" Lord, You will surely gather all mankind before You upon a day that will indubitably come. God will not break His promise."

And He says in the same Chapter .

" The day will surely come when each soul will be confronted with whatever good it has done. As for its evil deeds, it will wish that these were a long way off."

In these verses, to which we could if we wished quote many similar ones from God's Book that is entirely void of falsehood, there is a definite proof that our life will not come to an end by death. There is another life where there will be reckoning, rewarding and punishment.

Although Resurrection is one of the facts that religion has brought forth, yet it is also a fact that is realized by sound minds and sound logic.

For mind and logic necessitate that there should be between virtue and good, and vice and evil, the relation of cause and effect, i.e., the virtuous person should be rewarded with good for his good deeds, and the sinner should be punished by evil for his evil deeds.

Yet this may not be found in this life which we live on the earth: many are the virtuous who lead unhappy lives, and many are the evil who enjoy the wealth and the pleasures of this mundane life! This applies both to individuals and communities.

Therefore there must be another life, where the virtuous are requited for the good deeds they have done, and the evil are punished for the evils and sins they have committed: this is necessitated by the laws of ethics.

This was rightly observed by one of the masters of human thinking; he is Germany's famous philosopher Immanuel Kant who died in 1804. He is one of the most prominent advocates of the doctrine of "Obligation" in ethics in modern times.

He believes that the combination of virtuousness and happiness does not occur in this life; it is even improbable. It is indeed a problem that has to be solved.

In order to solve this problem rationally, he says, that we must take for granted the existence of God and the eternity of the soul, and he considers this self-evident and axiomatic in ethics. It must be taken for granted also that God's knowledge is perfect, so that He may know precisely

the value of every man and his deeds and what he deserves of happiness. God's ability must also be perfect so that He may transcend the laws of nature — which do not unite virtue to happiness by the unity of cause and effect — and reward the virtuous.

He believes as well that all this cannot be realized to its perfection except in the other world where good will be the reward of virtue and evil the reward of vice. Acceptance of these matters is essential in ethics.

We see, therefore, that resurrection or moving from this mundane life to the other eternal life is a matter on which intellect and religion agree; or, as the philosopher Ibn Rushd says, it is a matter on which the divine laws agree and is proved by the learned men.

For man has not been created in this mundane life in vain. God has created him for a noble aim, the realization of which, through his deeds, is the fruit of his existence in this mundane life. It is inevitable then that he should be raised to life after death to be judged for what he has done towards furthering this aim.

In this connection The All-Knowing and Wise God says in the Chapter entitled " The Believers " :

" *Did you think that We had created you in vain and that you would never be recalled to Us?* "

2. — THE NEXT LIFE

This mundane abode is a place of tasking and work; the other abode is a place of reckoning and rewarding. This is

what religion teaches, what justice, reason and logic profess, and what believers have faith in. But deniers of God and His missions believe that there is no life after this worldly one, that death leads to void and non existence, and that there is no other life at all As for those deniers, the reasonable should disregard them and their opinions; they will realize after death the falsehood of what they have believed in.

Those disbelievers who deny that God exists and that He restores to life and causes death, say : *"There is no other life but this; nor shall we ever be raised to life again."* They also say : *"Nothing but Time destroys us. Surely their guessing is evil!"*

It is strange that they swear by God, in Whom they do not profess to believe, or in Whom they have a distorted belief, that the dead are gone for ever : no one will be restored to life anew ! In this connectoin The Most High God says :

"They solemnly swear by God that He will never raise the dead to life. But God's promise shall surely be fulfilled, though most men may not know it. He will manifest to them that which they dispute, and the unbelievers shall know that they were lying. When We decree a thing, We need only say : 'Be,' and it is."

Would that they took towards this problem an attitude of hesitation and doubt; then it would be possible for them to return to faith. For it is said that doubt is a means that leads to conviction, provided the doubtful use their brains and do not take the attitude of obstinacy and pertinacity.

Besides, where could the virtuous hope for reward, being deprived of the pleasures of this mundane life which the

vicious and evil enjoy, were they not certain that there wou
be another eternal life where they would be fully requir
for the good they did in their mundane life ? !

However, what harm is there in having faith in resur
rection, reckoning and eternity ? And what risk is there in
believing that what the apostles communicated about these
matters is absolute truth ? There is no harm in that, nor
is there any risk. Indeed faith in these things is at all events
a sign of discretion and reasonableness. Long ago Abu Al-
Alaa' Al-Ma'arri said :

The astrologer and the doctor both said :
" Bodies will not be ressurected. "
" Away ", said I.
" If your claim be true,
I won't be harmed;
But if mine be true,
The losers you will be. "

In the pre-Islamic state of paganism, God removed the
veil from over the hearts and minds of some Arabs who
then saw that there would be another life after this mundane
one. But the vast majority of them were not of this doctrine,
for they believed that it was impossible that he who died and
became dust would be restored to life. They said disap-
provingly : " *What ! When we are turned to bones and
dust, shall we be restored to life ?* "

The Most High God answered them saying :

*" Say : ' You shall; whether you turn to stone or iron,
or any other substance which you may think unlikely to be
given life. '*

They will ask : 'Who will restore us ?'

Say : 'He that created you at first.'

They will shake their heads and ask : 'When will this be ?'

Say : 'It may be near at hand.' "

One of those disbelievers and deniers of resurrection and the life to come went to The Prophet, God's blessing be upon him, with decaying and rotten bones in his hand, and said : " O Muhammad ! Do you think that God restores these to life after their rotting ? ! " The Apostle, God's blessing be upon him, answered : " *Yes, and God will raise you to life and cast you into Hell-fire.* " (1)

In this connection The Most High God says in the Chapter entitled **"Yasin"**

" *He answers back in arguments, and forgets His own creation. He asks : 'Who will give life to rotten bones ?'*

Say : 'He who created them at first will give them life again : " He has knowledge of every creature."

The answer to this arrogant disbelievers' question lay within his very being. He forgot that he had been created out of the void, or rather from a little germ void of life. God's will and ability gave it life, and he became a full-grown man. He Who did this is able to raise the dead to life again after death.

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(1) Some said he was Abdullah Ibn Ubbey, some said he was Al-Aass Ibn Wa'il Al-Sahmy, others said he was Ubbey Ibn Khalaf Al-Gamhy. See Al-Qurtubi's Commentary, Parts 57-58, the Egyptian Dar Al-Kutub edition.

Similar to these verses, that are indicative of resurrection, is what The Most High God says in the Chapter entitled " Mary " :

" '*What*' *says man.* '*When I am once dead, shall I be raised to life?*'

" *Does man forget We created him out of the void?* " This is certainly a self-evident reply, that is confirmed by one's sense and observation of man, animal and plant. But *it is their hearts, and not their eyes, that are blind !*

Now, what are the signs indicative of this life to come? What will this life be like ? Will it be an eternal life ? What avail is there of belief in it to man in this mundane life ?

The Most High God says in the Chapter entitled " The Heights " :

" *They ask you about the Hour of Doom and when it is to come. Say :* ' *None knows except my Lord. He alone will reveal it at the appointed time. A fateful hour it shall be, both in the heavens and on the earth. It will come without warning.*'

" *They will put questions to you as though you had full knowledge of it. Say :* ' *None knows about it save God, though most men are unaware of this.*' "

God has then kept for Himself alone the knowledge of the time of the Hour of Doom and the Day of Judgement, Reckoning and Reward. This Day will come unexpectedly and will take us by surprise. Nevertheless, there will be signs which will be suggestive to those who are living at that time that it is near at hand and about to come. These signs

are called " the potents of the Hour of Doom " in the language of the Qurân. (1)

Many commentaries were written on these portents and signs. The Qurân mentions some of them. Some authors talked very much about them but without verification and accuracy. All this need not be detailed here.

Therefore it suffices to mention here that the advent of the Hour of Doom signifies the corruption of the earth and all sorts of life on it. Corruption will prevail to the extent that it becomes almost predominant over the whole world. Islam will grow so weak that it will seem as strange as when it started, according to the true or authoritative tradition.

At that time it will be better that the Day of Reckoning and Reward comes, as the world will be abundant in impiety, affliction, tyranny and sins. Many will go back to the worship of idols, as was the case in the pre-Islamic state of paganism.

The Prophet, God's blessing be upon him, says

" *The Hour of Doom will not come until the buttocks of the women of Doss tremble round Thil-Kholsa* ", viz. the posteriors of the women of this tribe shake as they go round this idol, this tribe worshipped it in the pre Islamic times. It means return to disbelief in God.

He says also " *The Hour of Doom will not come until the time comes when man, passing by another's grave,*

(1) The Chapter entitled Muhammad », God's blessing be upon him, verse No. 18.

says : 'I wish I were in his place,' " viz, because of the prevailing affliction.

In another tradition — the three traditions are agreed upon by the two Imams Al-Bukhari and Muslim - - he, God's blessings be upon him, says : " *The Hour of Doom will not come until there arise imposters and liars, nearing thirty in number, each claiming to be God's apostle.* "

Yet death is the real threshold to the Doomsday for him whose hour has come. It is for him to transfer from this world to the other world: Death is, so to speak, the key to the other world, and the road that leads to it. Through it man knows his destiny, whether Paradise or Hell-fire.

According to Abdullah Ibn Omar, may God be gracious to them both, The Apostle, God's blessing be upon him, said :

" *When one of you dies, his abode is shown to him morning and evening. If he is one of the heirs of Paradise, then it is an abode in Paradise; if of the heirs of Hell, then it is in Hell-Fire. He is told : Behold your abode until God raises you to life on the Day of Resurrection.* "

In this connection The Most High God says in the Chapter entitled " The Forgiving One " with regard to Pharoah and his people :

" *They shall be brought before the Fire morning and evenig, and when Last Day comes, a voice will cry : 'Let the peoplle of Pharaoh be sternly punished!'* "

When the Doomsday comes, the earth shall be gone with all that is on it, the heavens shall perish, and Sovereignty shall be the exclusive right of God alone, the Almighty

and the All-powerful One. Then there shall be resurrection for reckoning and rewarding.

According to Omar's Son, may God be gracious to them both, the Apostle, God's blessings be upon him, said: "*On the Day of resurrection God will hold the earth in His grasp, the heavens in His right hand and say: 'I am the King.'* Another version was related by Abu Hurayrah, may God be gracious to him, that the Prophet, God's blessings be upon him, said: *God will hold the earth in His grasp, fold up the heaven in His right hand and say:*

'I am the King; where are the kings of the earth?'"

In the following verses from the Chapter entitled "The Hordes", we find this severe period of time depicted most admirably, clearly and accurately in inimitable brevity:

"They underrate the might of God. But on the Day of Resurrection He will hold the entire earth in His grasp and fold up the heavens in His right hand. Glory be to Him! Exalted be He above their idols!

"The Trumpet shall be sounded and all who are in heaven and earth shall fall down fainting, except those that shall be spared by God. Then Trumpet will sound again and they shall rise and gaze around them. The earth will shine with the light of her Master and the Book will be laid open. The prophets and witnesses shall be brought in and all shall be judged with fairness: none shall be wronged. Every soul shall be paid back according to its deeds, for God knows of all their actions."

When the Day of Reckoning comes, every one will be led to his abode either in Paradise or in Hell-fire: The All-

knowing and Wise God knows who goes to which. Thus to Paradise and its bliss shall go its heirs, and to Hell-fire and its torment the heirs of Hell.

Al-Bukhari and Muslim reported, according to Harithah's narrative quoted from Wahb Al-huza'i, that the latter heard The Prophet, God's blessings be upon him, say: "*Shall I tell you who the heirs of Paradise are? The humble weak whom God will favour it they appeal to Him. Shall I tell who the heirs of Hell are? The hard-hearted, stubborn, presumptuous and arrogant.*"

We have no means of knowing of the Day of "Resurrection and Reckoning", what will occur in it, how life will be in Paradise and its eternal bliss and in Hell and its misery that lasts as long as God wills, and the discussions or the arguments that may run between the heirs of Paradise and those of Hell — we have no means of knowing of any of these and similar matters, except from the Book of God and the traditions of His Apostle. For it is on these two holy sources only that depends our knowledge of the state of things in the other world and the sort of life in it.

God says in the Chapter entitled "The Cave":

"*Tell of the day when We shall blot out the mountains and make the earth a barren waste; when We shall gather all mankind together, leaving not a soul behind.*

"*They shall be ranged before your Lord, who will say to them: 'You have returned to Us as We created you at first. Yet you thought Our promise was not to be fulfilled.'*

"*Their book will be set down before them, and you shall see the sinners dismayed at that which is inscribed in it. They shall say: 'Woe to us! What can this book*

mean ? It omits nothing small or great : all are noted down ! ' and they shall find their deeds recorded there. Your Lord will wrong none."

He, Exalted is His Name, says in the Chapter entitled "The Prophets" :

" We shall set up just scales on the Day of Resurrection, so that no man shall in the least be wronged. Actions as light as a grain of mustard seed shall be weighed out. Our reckoning shall suffice."

He says in the Chapter entitled "The Believers" :

" And when the Trumpet is sounded, on that day their ties of kindred shall be no more, nor shall they ask help of one another.

" Those whose scales are heavy shall triumph, but those whose scales are light shall forfeit their souls and abide in Hell for ever."

These are just a few of the many verses in the Qurân about the Day of Resurrection and Reckoning, what it will be like and how man gets to know what has been prepared for it of reward for his deeds in his mundane life. Man will also realize that he will receive complete justice, that God wrongs none but that it is people who wrong themselves.

Let us listen to the following verses from the Chapter entitled "The Hordes". In them we will see how the heirs of Hell will be led into Hell-fire, how the heirs of Paradise will be admitted to it, and the conditions of each party at that time.

" In hordes the unbelievers shall be led to Hell. When they draw near, its gates will be opened and its keepers will say to them : 'Did there not come to you apostles of your own who proclaimed to you the revelations of your Master and forewarned you of this day ? '

" 'Yes', they shall answer. And thus the punishment which the unbelievers have been promised shall be fulfilled. A voice will say to them : 'Enter the gates of Hell and stay therein forever.' Evil is the dwelling-place of the arrogant.

" But those who fear their Lord shall be led in bands to Paradise. When they draw near, its gates will be opened, and its keepers will say to them : 'Peace be to you you have been good men. Enter Paradise and dwell in it for ever.'

" They will say : 'Praise be to God who has made good to us His promise and given us the earth to inherit, that we may dwell in Paradise wherever we please.' Blessed is the reward of the righteous."

When the heirs of Paradise have settled in Paradise and those of Hell in Hell-fire, the former will enjoy bliss that is beyond the imagination of any human mind; the latter will experience such severe torment as none but God knows of. We need not elaborate this or that point, for there is in the Qurân much about it that helps us to understand some of its aspects.

It suffices to state here about the bliss of the heirs of Paradise — may God include us in them — the following tradition of The Apostle, God's blessings be upon him, reported by Al-Bukhari and Muslim :

Abu Hurayra, may God be gracious to him, reported that The Prophet, God's blessings be upon him, said :

" *God said : 'I have prepared for My good servants things that no human eye has ever seen, no ear has ever heard of, and no heart has ever contemplated.' Read if you wish: 'No mortal knows what bliss is in store for them.'* " (1)

The following is another tradition of The Apostle, God's blessings be upon him, reported by the Imam Muslim according to Al Mughirah Ibn Shu'bah's narrative :

" *Moses, God's blessings be upon him, asked his Lord : 'Which of the heirs of Paradise are the lowest in rank ?' He answered : 'A man who comes after the heirs of Paradise have been admitted to Paradise; a voice says to him : 'Enter Paradise!' He says : "But Lord how, after people have taken their places and settled in it ?'*

" *The voice says to him : 'Would you be satisfied to have the like of the kingdom of one of the kings of the earth ?' He says : 'Lord I would.' The voice says: 'You shall have it, twice it, three times it, four times it, five times it.' On hearing the fifth he says : 'God I accept.' The voice says : "You shall have it and ten times it, all that you crave to have and all that pleases your eyes.' He says . 'Lord I accept.'*

Moses, God's blessings be upon him, says: ' God *! Which are the highest in rank ? God says : 'Those whom I willed to be and whose honour and dignity I implanted in them with My Own Hand and sealed upon; to those I*

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(1) Chapter entitled « Adoration », verse 17.

give what no human eye has witnessed, no ear has heard of and no heart has ever contemplated.'

Thus it is reported: As the heirs of Paradise are in Paradise enjoying this bliss, for God has favoured and preferred them above all His creation, God looks upon them and says: *'O heirs of Paradise!'* They answer: *'We are at Your service, our Lord; glory to You!'* He says: *'Are you contented?'* They reply: *'Why should we not be? You have given us what You have not given to any of Your creation!'*

He says: *'I shall give you better than this.'* They ask: *'O God! What is there better than this?'* He says: *'Confer upon you My Grace and never My wrath.'* (1) God, Exalted in His name, spoke the truth when He said:

"In it they shall have all they wished; We will still have more."

Undoubtedly the life to come is an eternal life; this we find in the Qurân and the traditions of the Apostle, God's blessings be upon him. The Great Qurân often mentions that in its verses, whether with regard to the heirs of Paradise, the unbelievers or the transgressors and sinners of the believers.

In the Chapter entitled: "Luqman":

"Those that have faith and do good works shall enter the gardens of delight, where they shall dwell for ever. God's promise shall be fulfilled: He is the Mighty, the Wise One."

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(1) Reported by Al-Bukhari and Muslim.

In the Chapter entitled "The Confederate Tribes" :

" God has laid His curse upon the unbelievers and prepared for them a blazing fire. Abiding there for ever, they shall find none to protect or help them."

The same we find in the Chapter entitled "Revelations Well Expounnded :

" Thus shall the enemies of God be rewarded. They shall abide in Hell for ever, because they have denied Our revelations."

In the Chapter entitled "Ornaments of Gold" :

" The evil-doers shall endure for ever the torment of Hell. Their punishment will never be lightened and they shall be speechless with despair. We do not wrong them, but they wrong themselves."

With regard to the transgressors of the believers too, torment may be everlasting. For instance, The Most High God says in the Chapter entitled "Women" :

" He that kills a believer by design shall burn in Hell for ever. He shall incur the wrath of God, who will lay His curse on him and prepare for him a woeful scourge."

Al-Bukhari and Muslim reported that The Apostle, God's blessings be upon him said : " *When the heirs of Paradise have settled in Paradise and those of Hell in Hell-Fire, a voice calls: ' O heirs of Paradise no death. O heirs of Hell ! no death.' Then the heirs of Paradise become more joyful and those of Hell more grieved."*

With regard to the heirs of Paradise, 'eternity' is undoubtedly used in its absolute sense, i.e., ' without end '; but

it should mean 'a long stay' with regard to some of the heirs of Hell: the transgressors of the believers in God, His prophets, His apostles and the Last Day.

For The Merciful God may forgive them; or He may punish whom He will according to what He sees just, then admit them to Paradise after their receiving due punishment. God says in the Chapter entitled "Mary":

"There is not one of you who shall not pass through the confines of Hell; such is the absolute decree of your Master We will deliver those who fear Us, but the wrongdoers shall be left to endure its torments on their knees."

And in the Chapter entitled "Women" He, Exalted is His Name, says:

"God will not forgive those who serve other gods besides Him; but He will forgive whom He will for other sins."

In the Chapter entitled "The Hordes" He says

"Say: 'Servants of God, you that have sinned against your souls, do not despair of God's mercy, for He forgives all sins. He is the Forgiving One, the Merciful."

Anyhow, there are conversations that run between the heirs of Paradise and those of Hell. The Qurân recounts to us some of those conversations as an admonition and warning for those who know.

There in Paradise are its heirs delighted with what the Gracious God has given them; He has fulfilled His promise to them of everlasting bliss. They ask the heirs of Hell whether God has fulfilled His promise to them. The Most

High God recounts that in the Chapter entitled "The Heights"; He says :

"Then the blessed will cry out to the damned: 'What our ***Master*** *promised we have found to be true. Have you, too, found the promise of your Lord to be true?'*

"'Yes,' they shall answer, and a herald will cry out among them : 'Cursed are the evil-doers.'"

There in Hell-Fire the damned receive severe torment; they beg the blessed to grant them some water or some of what God has given them.

And between them runs the following conversation as recounted by God in the same Chapter :

"The damned will cry out to the blessed: 'Give us some water, or some of that which God has given you.' But the blessed shall reply 'God has forbidden both to the unbelievers, who made their religion a pastime and an idle sport, and who were seduced by their earthly life.'"

In their earthly life, a group of the humble followed their masters and elders, who led them the wrong way. They became like their masters in disbelief in God and His mission. When both are gathered together in Hell-fire in the life to come, there will be between them the argument which we find and read in the Chapter entitled "The Forgiving One' :

"And when they argue in Hell, the humble will say to the haughty : 'We have been your followers: will you now ward off from us a part of our punishment? But those who were haughty will reply : 'All of us are now in Hell. God has judged His servants.'"

As the Chapter proceeds, it describes a situation in which the heirs of Hell show **Submission** and supplication and the

angels in charge of them reject their appeals and argue back convincingly. The Most High God says :

" And the dwellers of Hell will say to its keepers : ' Implore your Master to relieve our torment for one day ! '

" ' But did your apostles not come to you with undoubted signs ? ' they will ask.

" ' Yes, ' they will answer. And their keepers will say : ' Then cry for help. ' But the cries of the unbelievers shall not be heard. "

Then an interesting conversation will run between the heirs of Paradise themselves, as they enjoy a continuous flow of the graces and favours of the Most High God. They will remember their first life on the earth and the temptation in it that persuaded people to disbelieve in God and deny Resurrection. The following scene depicts them and the following conversation between them is recounted by God in the following verses from the Chapter entitled "The Ranks" ·

" One of them will say : ' I had a friend who used to ask : " Do you really believe in the Resurrection ? When we are dead and turned to dust and bones, shall we be brought to judgement ? " ' "

The speaker will then look in the direction of the Fire; he will see his friend in the middle. He will say to his comrades in Paradise :

" ' Come, let us look down. ' He will look down and see his friend in the midst of Hell. "

He will then say to him :

" ' By Allah you almost ruined me ! But for the grace of God I should have surely been driven into Hell. ' "

The verses proceed to relate in this wonderful style and inimitable versification what these companions, of the heirs of Paradise, will feel of joy and contentment for what they have attained :

" ' Shall we not die a second time, or be punished at all ? '

Surely that is the supreme triumph. Let every man labour to achieve it. "

Now, at the end of our talk about the Islamic doctrine in general, and the doctrine of Resurrection and the life to come in particular, do we need emphasize the avail of this doctrine — which is the last of the Islamic doctrines — to man in this earthly life ?

We do not believe that the answer to this question needs elaboration, for it suffices to mention the fact that but for this doctrine the world would be more miserable than it is now. Hope for eternal reward is a drive to do good deeds, and fear of severe torment prevents many from doing evil deeds : in both cases lies the good of the individual, the community and the whole of humanity.

Faith in this doctrine prevents man from clinging cravingly to this world, and indulging in its pleasures illegitimately, as he believes that the other world is the real, true life, compared to which the pleasures of this world seem so scanty, and that rivalry and quarrel in hoarding the vanities of this world eventually bring about pains and evil.

Al-Bukhari and Muslim reported that Amr Ibn Awf Al-Anṣari said : " The Apostle of God, God's blessings be upon him, sent Abu Ubaydah Ibn Al-Garrah to Bahrein to

bring its tribute. God's Apostle, God's blessings be upon him, had reconciled himself with the people of Bahrein and appointed as their ruler Al-Alaa' Ibn Al-Hadrami. Abu Ubaydah returned with money from Bahrein; the Helpers heard of Abu Ubaydah's arrival and went to perform the dawn prayers with The Prophet, God's blessings be upon him.

When the dawn prayers was over, he left, but they stood in his way. He smiled when he saw them and said "I think you have heard that Abu Ubaydah has brought something ?"

"Yes, God's Apostle." He said: "Then rejoice and hope for what will please you. By God, I am not afraid you will become poor, but I am afraid this mundane world may give you much money as it did to those who lived before, and then you will fall into rivalry with it as they did, and eventually it will destroy you as it did them."

I do not mean by that that we should under-estimate earthly life to the extent of hating and renouncing it. What I aim at is that it should be the proper road to the life to come and that we should not over-estimate it. We should bear in mind the simile that God coined for us about this life and the comparison that He made between its pleasures and ornaments on the one hand and deeds of lasting merit on the other hand: He says in the Chapter entitled "The cave":

"Coin for them a simile about this life. It is like green herbs that flourish when watered by the rain, soon turning into stubble which the wind scatters abroad. God has power over all things.

"Wealth and children are the ornament of this life. But deeds of lasting merit are better rewarded by your Master and hold for you a greater hope of salvation."

When man has faith in all this, and bears in mind what God has prepared of reward for the righteous and punishment for the evil-doers, he will find it better to avoid evils and sins, to do good deeds and to obey God's orders, out of the fear of Him and out of the desire to enjoy what God has in store of everlasting bliss in the other world.

He will also find useful the following wise saying of The Prophet. Ibn Abbas reported that The Prophet, God's blessings be upon him, preaching to a man, said :

"Take advantage of five things before five others : your youth before your old age, your health before your illness, your wealth before your poverty, your leisure before your work and your life before your death."

It is God who gives guidance and guides whom He will to the straight path.

CHAPTER I.

THE ISLAMIC LEGISLATION (Al-Shari'a) ITS MEANING; THE NEED FOR IT; ITS BIRTH AND EVOLUTION; ITS PERFECTION

1. — When we use the word 'Legislation' (Al-Shari'a) we mean all the rules laid down by the Almighty for Muslims in their religion, whether mentioned in the Qurân or laid down by the Prophet. It thus comprises the principles of religion and explains everything relating to God and the other world. It also comprises research in the science of *Al-Tawhid* and the science of *Al-Kalaam*.

This legislation also encompasses the way a person lays down rules of conduct for himself and his family. It prescribes social relations and the ideals which should be pursued. It also shows the means of attaining these ideals. All this is known to us as the science of ethics.

Legislation then defines to us what should and should not be done. It is parallel to what is known to us today as the law.

Thus we find that one of the scholars who took pains to define scientific terms Muhammad El Tahauwi, says in this respect : " Legislation is the body of rules set down by God through one of the Prophets. If it deals with any of

our actions it is called actionary and supplementary. If it deals with conviction, it is basic and convictional, with no utterance."

He showed that there is a difference between Legislation and conviction or the study of religion, although he pointed out that sometimes the difference is overlooked, especially when a broad term is referred to instead of a minute detailed part of it.

Before El Tahauwi we find that Abu Ishac El Shatby made a distinction between the two terms in his introduction to his book "The Parallels in the Origin of Legislation". He says that Legislation draws the lines for Muslims in their deeds and utterances and beliefs. That is what it embraces.

This statement means that Legislation is synonymous with religion, not with research which does not deal with beliefs. Beliefs and convictions are left to the science of Al-Tawhid.

The Arabic language has defined the word "Legislation" before defining the word "Fiqh" (Jurisprudence). It is mentioned in many parts of the Qurân."*Then We put thee on the (right) way of religion : so follow thou (way),*"

This reference to Legislation puts it apart from the Christian Legislation or the Legislation of Moses. It means religion in a broad sense.

The word *Fiqh* was not known in the Arabic language until Islam. Ibn Khaldoun mentioned it in his Introduction. He wrote: *Fiqh* is the knowledge of the rules of God Almighty, rules descending from the Book. If laws are derived from these rules and signs, then they are called *fiqh*.

PART VI

THE ISLAMIC LEGISLATION

He then goes on to say that those who derived these laws at the beginning of Islam were called readers, as opposed to those who could not read the book, because illiteracy was prevalent then. Afterwards Islam prevailed in many countries, and illiteracy was removed by reading the Book. It was possible to derive meanings and *Fiqh* was perfected. It became a science, and the name was changed from readers to scientists or *Foqaha.*

THE NEED FOR LEGISLATION

The Islamic *Fiqh* is like any other material or moral idea. It must pass through steps of evolution. It must develop until it reaches its grade of perfection and growth. It must then pass through a phase of aging.

The Arabs, in whose language the Book descended and who became the bearers of the banner of Islam, propagating it in all countries of the earth, were really an illiterate nation. They did not possess what their neighbours the Romans or the Persians possessed in the field of science or philosophy and culture.

The Arabs were only interested in the science of words and poetry, and in the narration of biographies and history. They also paid some attention to the science of prophecy which their life and circumstances forced upon them. "Not to know the facts, and not to practise science" as Saêd the Andalusian who died in the year 462 Hig. says.

We find others beside him referring to the cultural scientific state of the Arabs before Islam. History has kept for us everything they found.

Among them was Abu Ishac El Shatby who says that the Arabs had some interest in "the science of stars", and how they lead to safety on land and at sea, how time changes with the movement of the stars. All this is also mentioned in the Book, in the Qurân.

The Arabs were also interested in the winds, and the rains and the clouds and the tempests. The Qurân and the sayings of the Prophets have shown to us what is right and what is wrong in this respect.

The Arabs studied medicine which was based on experiment, not on the original bases known to some of the Greeks.

Besides all this, the Arabs had naturally a pattern of rules that did not descend from a legislative power as happened after Islam. They were rules taken from tradition and circumstances, taken mostly from neighbouring countries, like Syria, where Roman law was enforced, or like Iraq, where Persian law was enforced. Yathreb or Madina later was governed by Jews and they had their Mosaic Legislation.

Furthermore, we all know from the history of nations and peoples, no matter how civilized intellectually or scientifically, that their society must have a set of laws on which to base its transactions and personal relations, like marriage for instance, or like dealing with crime and criminals, and other problems of life.

The Arabic society in the Arab Peninsula was no exception to this fact before Islam, because on this depends the existence of the species, and on this civilization is built.

We all know that the Arabs before Islam knew many rules, which were later revised by Islam. Some of them

were recognized by the Prophet, especially after their crystallization into rules of conduct which they followed in their dealings. This shows that Islam dawned on a community which had its own laws and traditions.

The Arabs were very well trained in matters of transaction like selling, pawning and mortagage, investment, speculation and leasing. Islam acknowledged many of these when it was found out that they were suitable for use. It abolished many others when they were found to be useless or inappropriate. Usury was among the prohibited customs. Islam found that it entails taking money to which one has no right. Islam also forbade a number of transactions which we shall refer to later, because they were a cause of deceit and disagreement. To explain this we would like to relate the following :

It was told in the book of law of Abu Dawoud and Ibn Hanbal that the Apostle told El Saêb Ibn Abu El Saêb once on the day of Fath : " You were my partner, and a good partner, you were honest and forthright. " Ibn Hisham, talking about the marriage of the Apostle to Khadiga, the daughter of Khowayled, said: "Khadiga was a merchant, with honour and money", hiring men through her money, speculating with it, thus benefitting them.

We know then that the Arabs knew about partnership and speculation. Islam approved of them too, because life cannot go on without them. Islam then laid down the rules and conditions for them so that the outcome would be for the good and benefit of all within God's Legislation and according to His Prophets rules.

The Arabs knew also of the transaction of selling something, some crop or product, while it was on the trees or in

the field. The Prophet has accepted this kind of transaction while forbidding the selling of something non-existent.

To this the two most important Imams, Al-Bokhari and Muslim, refer, saying: "The Apostle, the prayers of God be upon him, came to Madina and found that people were lending dates to each other. He said : "*If one lends anything, it should be weighed properly and lent for a certain length of time.*"

As for personal relations the Arabs recognized certain rules in the relations between man and woman. Islam approved what suited its Legislation and forbade what it considered open illegitimacy.

It is said that the Imam Al-Bokhari mentioned in his "Sahih" that the rites of marriage in Pre-Islamic days were of four kinds. One of them resembled what is followed today in the sense that a man proposes to another for the hand of his daughter or ward then he pays her dowry and marries her. This was approved by Islam after laying down certain rules and limits. This kind entailed the necessity of engagement and dowry. A woman, also, was never forced into a marriage.

It was related in the book "Al Aghani" by Abul Farag Al Asfahani that Al Hareth Ibn Ouf Al Marry came to Aos Ibn Haretha Al Taie asking for the hand of one of his daughters. He had three. The father laid the proposal before the eldest and the middle one. They refused him. So he went to the youngest, telling her that the man was one of the highly placed persons of the Arabs. She answered that they were of good family too and that she was not ugly or incapable and that she would accept, but if he divorced her God would never forgive him.

That shows that the Arabs before Islam knew of some of the rules of Islam in marriage. They also knew about divorce, although they were not tied down by any number in divorce.

It was also related that Aisha, the peace of God be upon her, said : " A man in Pre-Islami could divorce his wife as many times as he wanted. He could even remarry her during her preparatory days, even after divorcing her a hundred times or more For that reason the Qurân limited the number of divorces to three after which there is no reconciliation. "

The Prophet, prayers of God be upon him, married Khadiga through the rite of engagement.

Abul Abbas Al Mobrad, who died in the year 285 of Al Higra, says : " Abu Taleb stood up when the marriage was announced to say : 'Thanks to God, that we are the offspring of Ibrahim and Ismail, and that He gave us this land and this House to visit and made us rulers. Muhammad Ibn Abdallah, my nephew, is a person unequalled in Quraish, in his kindness and wisdom If he has no money, money is not immortal. It comes and goes. He wants to marry Khadiga, daughter of Khowayled — she also wants to marry him. What you want for her dowry I shall pay. "

Abu Hisham says that Abu Taleb said : " You all know Muhammad. He has proposed to Khadiga, and has paid her dowry, the immediate part of it and the late-part. " They were then duly married. The Uncle of Khadiga, Amr Ibn Assad, and her cousin Waraqua Ibn Nofal attended the

marriage which was also witnessed by many of the high ranking persons of Quraish.

Thus we find that the Prophet performed his marriage on the rites approved by Islam. He paid a dowry, and he called witnesses so that the marriage was made public.

In other personal relations the Arabs before Islam disapproved of murder: They made murder permissible through another murder, as vengeance. A killing that was not premeditated was punishable by the payment of a ransom.

Islam did not approve of this ransom, but approved what they called the oath, which meant that fifty persons should be chosen by the head of the tribe and then swear that they did not kill or see anybody kill the person. They should *also* swear that they do not know the murderer. Then the ransom was paid by all the people of the town. The Prophet, as mentioned in Al-Bokhari, approved of ransom and ordered it when one of the Ansar was killed in Jewish territory and nobody knew who had killed him.

We find from all this that although the Arabs in pre-Islamic days had their rules and traditions to follow in their everyday life, they could not base a community that was perfect on them. They were in great need of Islam and its legislation.

Actually Islam appeared at a time when the Arabs and the whole world were in great need of it. It came with the true conviction and the right legislation, and the right system on which a sane community could be founded, so that it could take part in the resurrection of the world and its development into the world of progress and civilization.

THE ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT OF LEGISLATION

This legislation as we know it today did not spring off complete and intact. It passed through phases of development until it reached perfection, thus following the rules of nature.

But before the death of the Prophet the legislation was complete and perfect. The *Ulema* and the philosophers did not introduce anything after His death. They went back to what had been perfected during His lifetime to be inspired by what was in the book. Then they put the rules into practice according to the place and to the circumstances and to the public interest.

Legislation progressed on the bases of the Qurân and the rules of the Sunna, whether spoken or acted or decisive, after a period of 22 years in which the Qurân was completed, when it was said : " *This day I have perfected your religion for you, completed my favour upon you, and have chosen for you Islam as your religion.* "

This part of the Qurân is said to have been sent on the day of the pilgrimage in the tenth year of Al-Higra. Some say that it was the last saying of the Qurân. Nevertheless the Prophet stayed alive after it for 81 nights.

We must notice here that only two-thirds of the Qurân were revealed at Mecca and did not comprise any rules of Legislation. They were only meant to call for the unity of God and the discarding of all other imaginary gods. They were also meant to give proof of that and of the fact that the other world exists. Another purpose was to calm the

Prophet and to encourage him in the face of all the difficulties he was meeting at the time. It contained many examples of what the other Apostles and Prophets had encountered in their path. As for legislation it only came in the civil parts of the Qurân which comprise about a third of it.

This was quite logical, for the first duty was to drive people away from false religions and to lead them to the right one. The part of the Qurân, which was Mecca, contained, however, some practical legislation which was offered in a general way and not in a detailed one. After the victory of the Prophet was ensured and his religion was solidly stabilized and people began to gather under its banner, it was then time to lay down detailed legislatoin which would regulate the lives of the Muslims and their dealings and their community. This was all done in Madina.

Islam and Muslims started to have a state in Madina, a state which needed rules to draw the line between it and other states. That was the reason for the many legislative measures which arose in Madina.

It was also natural that such measures should spring up gradually whenever the need called for them. This was meant to facilitate matters for Muslims and to alleviate any embarrassment which might arise from the fact that the Muslims were in the circumstances and traditions of a life which was different from their previous way of life.

If one reads the Qurân carefully one finds that it contains answers to questions asked by the Muslims of the Prophet when they needed solutions to some of the problems they met in the course of their lives. It also contains legislation sent down without any questioning. We find

that the Qurân contains many terms such as "They ask you" or "They need your advice."

Thus we find that legislation during that time depended on these two great origins ; The Qurân and the Sunnâ. If the Prophet was confronted by a problem which asked for the advice of the legislature, he looked for Godly inspiration. If it descended upon him it was enacted. If it did not, that meant that God had delegated His Prophet to find out the necessary legislation knowing very well that he would do it free from partiality or prejudice.

At other times the Prophet made the effort of passing judgement. God only agreed to this judgement if it was sound, although the Prophet sought the inspiration of God's law and His legislation. We must then deduce that all legislation won by Muslims during the life of the Prophet was donated as a gift, either through the Qurân directly or through the Prophet himself.

We are not going to discuss the argument which arose between many people as regards the judgement passed by the Prophet. We only draw attention to the fact that the Prophet had sometimes his own judgement which was not agreed upon by God. God reprimanded the Prophet for that.

It is mentioned in the book of the Imam Ahmad Ibn Hanbal who died in the year 421 of Al Higra that when the Muslims were victorious on the day of Badr, they captured many of the polytheists. The Prophet asked Abu Bakr, Omar and Ali what to do with the captives.

Abu Bakr said " O God's Prophet, those are our cousins and kinsmen, I think we should collect ransom from them

and then that would be a lesson to them. They might afterwards become a help to us."

Omar said : "I do not agree with Abu Bakr but I want you to give me freedom and to allow Hamzah to break the neck of someone else, so that God will know that we have no sympathy for the polytheists, because those mentioned are their leaders and heads."

Omar goes on to say that the Prophet liked what Abu Bakr suggested but he did not like his opinion, so he took the ransom from the captives. "The next day I went to see the Prophet and I found him with Abu Bakr and they were both weeping. I asked the Prophet why he was weeping, he and Abu Bakr, so that if I were convinced I would join in weeping.

"The Prophet said that he was weeping at what befell his friends through taking the ransom from the captives. Their torture, he went on, is lower than this tree. And he pointed to a tree nearby.

"It is not fitting for a Prophet that he should have prisoners of war until He hath thoroughly subdued the land. Ye look on the temporal goods of this world; but God looks to the Hereafter and God is exalted in Might, wise. Had it not been for a previous ordainment from God, a severe penalty would have reached you for the (ransom) that ye took."

We find that the Prophet sometimes passed his own judgement after consulting some of his friends. But God did not agree to this opinion and revealed in the Book that the right judgement differed from the one made by the Prophet.

Another example was the occasion when some hypocrites asked the permission of the Prophet to be absent from the campaign of Tabouk; — the Prophet agreed despite the fact that the excuses they offered were flimsy. Some of the believers also were absent from the campaign. God Who knows what is inside the hearts and minds did not agree the granting of this permission. He explained to his Prophet that he should have differentiated between sincerity and hypocrisy before granting permission.

In this respect the Qurân said :

" If there had been immediate gain (in sight), and the journey easy, they would (all) without doubt have followed thee, but the distance was long, (and weighed) on them. They would indeed swear by God, 'If we only could, we should certainly have come out with you' : they would destroy their own souls; for God both know that they are certainly lying. God give thee grace ! Why didst thou grant them exemp'ion until those who told the truth were seen by thee in a clear light, and thou hadst proved the liars ? "

All this means that the Apostle was not right in his judgement, because some of these people were believers and some were hypocrites.[1]

We said that legislation during this period was based on two origins, the Qurân and the Sunnâ. The Qurân gave the broad rules in a general way and the Prophet had to look into the details of these rules and define them.

We find, however, in the Sunnâ much legislation that the Qurân does not contain, although it does not differ in its content from the spirit of the Qurân or from the inten-

tions and meanings contained in it. This is no wonder, since the duty of the Prophet is always the explanation of his message in a way that corresponds with the intentions of the sender of the message, Almighty God.

The rôle of the Prophet then was the rôle of explainer, an inspired explainer under the guidance of God. The Sunnâ explained the generalities of the book in detail whenever the occasion called for such an explanation. For exemple :

1. — God ordered the believers to pray. This was mentioned in the Book. But the Book did not show the Muslims the times for prayer nor the number of prayers per day nor the number of kneelings that happen in each prayer. In short no detailed description of the rules of prayer came in the Qurân. The Sunnâ showed clearly all this. When the Prophet prayed he looked at the believers and said "*Pray as you see me do.*" Abu Horayra and others showed clearly how the Prophet prayed.

2. — The same applies to fasting. God ordered the Muslims to fast : "*Ramadan is the (month) in which was sent down the Qurân, as a guide to mankind, also clear (signs) for guidance and Judgement (between right and wrong). So every one of you who is present (at his home) during that month should spend it in fasting, but if anyone is ill, or on a Journey, the prescribed period (should be made up) by days later.*"

The Prophet defined the month and said that it is a moon month not a sun one, and also defined that fasting starts at dawn and lasts till sunset, and that the month of fasting starts with the appearance of the crescent and ends with its new appearance. The Prophet also gave the judge-

ment upon him who does not fast whether intentionally or out of forgetfulness.

3. — The same applies to Al Zakat. Zakat was ordered and mentioned in many parts of the Qurân : God said: "*practice regular charity,*" and said: "*of their goods take alms, that so thou mightest purify and sanctify them.*" *The Almighty said also: "but render the dues that are proper on the day that the harvest is gathered," and said "And those in whose wealth is a recognized right for the needy who asks and him who is prevented (for some reason from asking)."*

But it was the Sunnâ that showed the amount of wealth that constitutes Al Zakat. It also defined the percentage *of money or products or investment or livestock.*

4. — As for the Pilgrimage, the Qurân says: "*Pilgrimage thereto is a duty men owe to God, — those who can afford the Journey.*" "*And complete the Hajj and 'Umra in the service of God," and mentioned Ihram saying : " and do not shave your heads until the offering reaches the place of sacrifice," and mentioned standing on mount 'Arafat', saying: "Then when you pour down from (Mount) 'Arafat'. and as for plying between Safa and Marwa God said " Behold ! Safa and Marwa are among the symbols of God," and concerning circumambulation God said : "And sanctify my House for those who compass it round, or stand up, or bow, or prostrate themselves (Therein in prayer").*

The Sunnâ defined the way of Al Ihram — its time and when it was necessary. It also defined the number of circumambulations of the Kaâbah and the standing upon Arafat and for how long. All this became known to us through the actions of the Prophet which were mentioned by his disciples.

So we find that the Sunnâ was an explanation of the Qurân. *"And We have sent down unto thee (also) the Message; that thou mayest explain clearly to men what is sent for them."*

The Prophet was a legislator through his actions and words, even of many of the rites that were not mentioned in the Qurân, as what happened in Zakat Al Fitr (Zakat of the Feast of Bairam). The Prophet always had in mind the spirit of the Qurân, and the good it contains for humanity.

Thus the legislature was quite complete and perfect at the time of the Apostle's death.

"This day I have perfected your religion for you, completed my favour upon you, and have chosen for you Islam as your religion."

When Islam spread to the east and the west, to the north and to the south, it encompassed Iraq, Syria, Egypt and the countries of northern Africa and other countries.

Each of these countries had its own civilisation which had many angles. Each country also had its traditions, rules and laws. When the Arabs mixed with the peoples of these nations they were affected by their ways of thinking and behaviour.

Despite all this, things happened which needed the provision of legislation apart from the Apostle's legislation, owing to the development of dealings and transactions. This need had a big influence on the progress of legislation.

Another element which was influential in that sense was the emigration of many of the followers after the time of Omar Ibn El Khattab to many of these lands. They

took with them much of the Prophets' legislation. They deduced from this many laws.

All these elements had their effect in the appearance of many studious researchers. Many of the believers read the Qurân and tried to analyse most of its sayings to make their concept quite clear with no misunderstanding.

Thus the Islamic studies took shape. Their origins began to be recognized, meaning the Book and the Sunnâ and relativity and social concept. Many of the traditions and rules of the different countries which came under the banner of Islam affected the legislation in a way that was strong and quite widely felt.

As for the period that immediately followed the disciples of the Prophet, we cannot afford but recognize their true understanding of the spirit of the Qurân. Actually they were nearer than we are to the understanding of this spirit. We must nevertheless make allowance for the change in environment and habits and laws, and we must recognize the influence such a difference ought to have.

If Omar Ibn Al Khattab sought the advice of Abu Bakr, as was mentioned before, that does not mean that he acted according to this advice always. There were differences of opinion between the two owing to the change of time.

We think that it is advisable to state some examples of such differences, so that we may be able to discern the cause of them.

Abu Bakr used to equate between Muslims in donations. When he was reminded that there is good in preference owing to the fact that some are better than others, owing to the efforts and struggle for the sake of God, Abu Bakr used

to say that he was well acquainted with all these facts, but he would rather leave the preference of God. As for donations and gifts, he, Abu Bakr, thinks that equality is better than preference. He said: "Their qualities are known to God. As for donations or pensions, equality is asked for."

When Omar came, riches came with all the military campaigns. He differed from this opinion of Abu Bakr. Omar did not want to treat those who had fought against God's Prophet on the same lines as those who had fought with him. He said: "I am one of you. We all follow the Book and the Prophet's legislation. A man is preferred if he is a veteran in Islam or if he is a rich person or if he is in great need."

Thus Omar preferred some over others. He, however, was seeking also equality, because it is equality in Islam to give each owing to his needs. It is not equality to make all people rich or wealthy. Each should have his share which is due to him through his efforts and struggle for the glory of Islam.

Omar says in this respect: "Ibn El Khattab only wants justice and equality."

But what had the most strong influence and effect on building up the state at that time was the difference of opinion between Omar and the followers as regards the distribution of land among the Muslims after their victory and their conquest of these lands. There was an opinion which said that it should go to the fighters who had the honour of conquering it. Another opinion was to leave it to its owners and levy taxation on it for the benefit of the Muslims throughout the years.

When Iraq and Syria were conquered Omar thought that the land should not be distributed among the conquerers, but it should be taxed for the benefit of the Muslims and their off spring. He said "How would it look if we distribute the land and give it to people who are not its inheritors ? This is not the opinion of God in The Book." *(Some part is due) to the indigent Muhajirs, those who were expelled from their homes and their property, while seeking grace from God and (His) good pleasure, and aiding God and His Prophet· such are indeed the sincere ones; — But those who, before them, had homes (In Medina) and had adopted the faith, — show their affection to such as came to them for refuge, and entertain no desire in their hearts for things given to the (latter), but give them preference over themselves, even though poverty was their (own lot). And those saved from the covetousness of their own souls, — they are the ones that achieve prosperity.*

And those came after them say : " Our God *! forgive us, and our brethren who came before us into the faith, and leave not, in our hearts, rancour (or sense of injury) against those who have believed. Our* God *" thou art indeed full of kindness, most merciful."*

But the opposers of Omar did not very much relish the denial by Omar of the land that they had gained through their swords and his opinion of distributing the gain among people who had not taken part in the campaign. Abdul Rahman Ibn Auf said: " The land and its owners are war loot given to the conquerers by God. Four-fifths of it should go to the conquerers as the Qurân says : *' And know that out of all the booty that ye may acquire (in war) a fifth share is assigned to God, — and to the Prophet, and to near relatives, orphans, the needy, and the wayfarer.' "*

When the difference became serious, Omar thought of seeking advice. He consulted the first emigrants. They also differed amongs themselves. He asked the judgement of ten of the followers, five from the Aôs and five from Khazrag.

When they met and his opposers explained their opinion and their proof, he said, "There is nothing left to be conquered after the land of Kisra. I think that I am going to keep land with its owners and levy tax on them. Do you see these big cities ? They need men and armies to guard them. Syria, Egypt, El Koufah, El Basra, they all need armies, and armies need money. If I distribute the land, where shall I get the money for the armies ? "

Finally Omar won. This was an inspiration from God for the good of one and all in the present and in the future.

We notice that both parties based their opinions on the Qurân. Those who opposed Omar were leaning on "Surât El Anfal" which said that the Apostle distributed the land of the Jews of Khaibar among the conquerers as encouragement.

As for Omar he was referring to "Surât El Hashr" which said that the conquered land was too honourable to be distributed among the conquerers alone, especially that he was looking ahead to the future. In that he says: If I were the last Muslim, I would distribute the land we conquered, as the Prophet did with Khaibar". We find that he was right in his anticipation and that what he did was for the good of the general benefit of Muslims.

Another difference as the one that arose in a matter of inheritance. Abu Bakr was of the opinion that a grand-

father should alienate the brothers from inheriting as they do not inherit with the father according to the Book and the Sunnâ. Omar did not think the same. He did look upon the grandfather as a father. The brothers should share the inheritance with him while they do not with the father.

Perhaps Abu Bakr had in mind what was in the Book :

" *And I follow the ways of my fathers, — Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.* "

Although Jacob alone was the father, not Isaac or Abraham who were grandfathers, Omar, peace of God be on him, looked at the reality not the metaphor.

It was, also considered during the time of Abu Bakr and some years of Omar that if a man says once that he has divorced his wife three times, this means that only one divorce has taken place and thence reconciliation is possible. Omar then made it three separate times before it was impossible for a reconciliation to take place, unless the wife should marry another who would then divorce her before she could go back to her former husband. As regards this he said: " If people use haste in a matter which needs all the time and thinking they could muster, we make them pay for that. " He made them pay for their haste in a thing that was the most hateful to God : divorce. Many of the followers disagreed with him in this. They thought that if a man pronounced the word of divorce three times, then it was a final one.

We find that many of the followers disagreed with this opinion, following in that the judgement of the Prophet and Abu Bakr. Among those who disagreed were Ali and Abu

Moussa El Ashari, Zubair Ibn El Awam and Abdullah Ibn Abbas.

The disagreement only took place when the Qurân or the Sunnâ did not contain a phrasing that was intact. Into this came opinion and agreement was reached by improvisation or in view of the public interest. In any case they usually took the Qurân and the Sunnâ for inspiration.

We come to the conclusion that legislation was based on four origins: the Book, the Sunnâ, opinion or the common good, and finally the unanimity. Sometimes the situation itself calls for a kind of legislation, and sometimes it is a recognized way of action as it happened during the Apostle's time.

After the time of the disciples comes the time of Moàweya Ibn Abi Sufian until the end of the first hundred years.

This period starts with the year of the community, which was the forty first year of Al Higra, when all Muslims agreed to choose Moaweya Ibn Abi Sufian the Omayad as Khalif after Hassan Ibn Ali, Grace of God, be upon him, abdicated for him. Thus begins the state of Beni Omayad.

This period was renowned in legislation for the following :

1. — Muslims disagreed politically; some were Kha warig, some Sunnis, others Shiàa. This disagreement had its mark on legislation. The Khawarig only recognized what their own men told them. So did the Shiàa. As for the bulk of Muslims they relied upon what had been proven right, no matter what the other sects thought of them.

2. — Owing to the spread of Islam through its many conquests many of the followers were dispersed in different lands, especially after the time of Omar Ibn El Khattab, who had forbidden the followers to leave Medina. Omar had not wanted them to be dazzled by the wide world which Islam is now encompassing.

Many of those who dispersed were scholars, men of high culture who did not always approve of or agree with the legislation of the followers as regards religion. They would rather have gone back to the Book for advice.

For the above two reasons we find that many of the sayings referred to the Prophet spread. Everybody related a saying that he himself had heard or which had been related to him by someone who had heard the Prophet say it.

3. — For that reason many of the sayings related to be said by the Prophet are not right. Some of them are even lies with the intention of perplexing the followers and the believers so that they would not know what was wrong and what was right.

4. — Some of the khalifs of the Omayad state were also very arrogant and adamant in their opinions, preferring to give up their predecessors' way of life, especially of those in Medina. Those khalifs also originated the principle of the heir to their positions, a system which had not been known in Islam before.

5. — As a result some of the chosen followers and scholars aimed at creating the science of legislation, basing it on the two great origins, the Book and the Sunna. They thought that this should be the ideal law for the Muslims

to follow. This was the beginning of theological legislation *(fiqh)*.

Among those scholars was Said Ibn El Mossayeb, who died in the year 93 of the Higra, who was applied when Moaweya made his son Ziad heir to him, ignoring thereby the legislation and succumbing to political pressure. Said used to say: "May God oppose someone (meaning Moaweya); he was the first to change the legislation of God's Prophet."

6. — Many opinions were given whenever anything or any incident asked for a decision. Muslims found themselves living in a world of new laws and traditions, which had to initiate new legislation.

We must here add another reason for this new legislation, which was that most scholars found it wiser to improvise in interpreting the Book owing to the many different versions of the Prophet's sayings, related by not very authoritative sources. One problem was tackled by many different and contradictory opinions.

7. — Two trends in legislation appeared, the trend of those who adhered to the sayings of the Prophet and the trend of those who adhered to opinions of scholars.

Most of the followers preferred to legislate according to the Book and the Sunna. If they failed to find in these two origins a solution to the problem confronting them, they referred to the opinions, although it is said that many of them did not think highly of opinions.

When the followers were gone those who adhered to the sayings of the Prophet appeared, and so appeared some

who stuck to God's legislation, according to the meanings and goals it contained.

That is why one should respect the opinion that has sprung from wisdom, otherwise we find that legislation becomes a frozen, static thing, especially that the sayings were not related honestly or authoritatively.

Most of those who adhered to sayings lived in the Hijaz and most of those who adhered to opinions lived in Iraq. This is no wonder since Hijaz was the birthplace of the Sunna and Iraq is a fairly new country with its ancient civilization and its big share of legal knowledge before Islam, a country where different mentalities blended, giving rise to the need for opinion and legislation whenever it was difficult to refer to the Qurân or the Sunna which Iraq hardly knew.

Each of these two groups had a president. Said Ibn El Mossayeb was the head of the group believing in sayings. He was one of seven who helped to spread sayings. Ibrahim Ibn Yazid Ibn Keis El Nokhai, was head of the group of opinion.

Later the group of the saying spread and divided into Malki, Shafei, Hanbali, and Zaheri who were followers of Dawoud Ibn Ali. Those adhered to the Qurân and the sayings. As for the Ahnaf they are part of the sect of opinion. The Ahnaf are related to the Sheikh Abi Hanifa, the founder of this sect.

If we follow the origins of legislation we find many differences among the group of opinion and find many differences among the group of the sayings, owing to the difference in the origins they refer to.

We end by saying that many opinions with different trends appeared during that time. We are simply going to refer to their opinions which the scholars of legislation laid hands upon.

THE PERFECTION OF LEGISLATION

Now comes the time of maturity and perfection. This period is considered the longest in the age of legislation as it lasted for about 250 years. It started in the second century of Al Higra and lasted till the middle of the fourth.

During this period most of the big sects of Islam that we know today appeared, — the sects of Abu Hanifa, Malek, El Shafei and Ibn Hanbal of the Sunna and the sects of El Zaydia and the Imams of the Shiaa.

Other sects founded by other scholars appeared during that period, but they became obsolete through the years, because they could not find anybody to hold to them and try to make them immortal.

We should first of all try to draw attention to the characteristics of this period. One of them was the uprise of the Abbasid dynasty after the fall of the Omayad. Its first Khalif was Abu El Abbas known by the name of " the assassin " owing to the blood that was shed during his reign. The Abbasid state started with the year 132 of Al Higra

The uprise of this state is considered an important incident in the history of legislation because it was based on the name of religion. Its men were concerned with the religious life and consequently many scholars of legislation appeared during its time.

It is also known of the Abbasid Khalifs that they held scholars of legislation in high esteem. We find also that the Imam Malek Ibn Anas addresses the Khalif Al Rashid with advice reminding him of his duties towards God and the Muslims. We also find that this Khalif sends his two sons, El Amin and Al Mamoun to the mosque to attend the sermons.

We also find that Al Rashid asks Abu Youssef, the disciple of Abu Hanifa, to write a book from which he may gain inspiration for the financial administration of the state. The book was written and called " Al Kharag ", and in its introduction he addresses the Khalif saying :

" Try to govern by justice and do not stray or else your subjects will also be led astray. Beware of prejudice and anger and beware of the wrath of God. Treat all people on the same basis, the far and the near If God asks you what you do, await the answer.

I recommend you to keep what God has left in your custody and only look at Him or else you will not see the right road and you will not know what to do. Treat yourself with severity because the ruler who is a spendthrift does not know how to repay what he has spent. "

Al Rashid was not the only Khalif to ask the advice of legislators. All of them did the same.

No wonder then that legislation blossomed during this time. Many books were written describing practical ways of using legislation.

The Abbasid dynasty started in Iraq, the birthplace of the Persian civilization and other civilizations that came to

the country, and mingled with the Arab civilization and the Arab mentality — its best part — and produced the glory of legislation.

The scientific movement also bloomed and blossomed owing to many elements, the first of which was the translation of the books of philosophy from Greek into Arabic, and also the introduction into Arabic of much of the Persian and Roman heritage. It is only fair to say that the move for translation actually started during the time of the Omayad state but it took and gathered its force during the time of the Abbasids, and this thanks to the Khalif El Mamoun.

The logic of Aristotle and his philosophy were translated into Arabic. Other books of philosophy by the outstanding philosophers were also translated into Arabic, Scientists and scholars naturally benefited greatly from all this.

The Muslims also chose some from amongst their scholars to examine and study the saying of the Apostle, to point out the correct and discard the others and then to collect them in certain books known as the "Diwans" so that Muslims could refer to them as they refer to the Qurân to know their religion and its legislation. This was a very good and appreciated step to preserve the origins of the Sunna.

The most celebrated of these books are the ones known by the name of the "SIX BOOKS" as most of their authors were very careful in their study. Those are .

1. — Abu Abdullah Muhammad Ibn Ismail Al Bokhari, who died in the year 256 of Al Higra.

2. — Muslim Ibn El Haggag Al Nisabouri, who died in the year 261 of Al Higra.

3. — Abu Dawoud Soliman El Sagistani, who died in the year 275 of Al Higra.

4. — Abu Eissa Mhammad Ibn Eissa El Tarmazy who died in the year 279 of Al Higra.

5. — Ibn Abdullah Muhammad Ibn Yazid El Kazwini, known as Ibn Maga, who died in the year 275 of Al Higra.

6. — Abu Abdel Rahman Ahmad Ibn Shoaeb Al Nessaire, who died in the year 303 of Al Higra.

All these books gave very rich subject matter to the scholars from which they could deduce legislative rulings. They also had their very noticeable influence on the growth and perfection of legislation.

It was also natural that each scholar should stick to his opinions and to try with his disciples to base them on a solid basis which could have a logical leaning.

That was how legislation had its many sects and principles. Some of them became obsolete while others remained immortal.

THE CHARACTERISTICS OF ISLAMIC LEGISLATION AND ITS BASIS

Islamic legislation has its own characteristics, some of which are a product of its nature and some a result of its evolution.

We could summarize these characteristics as follows:

1. — It goes back in its general basis to God's inspiration.

2. — Its ruling are governed by the incentive of religion and ethics.

3. — Its reward is both in this world and in the other world.

4. — It has a communal tendency.

5. — It is liable to development according to the circumstances of time and place.

6. — Its aim is the organization of life, public and private, and the facilitation thereof, and it also aims at the happiness of mankind.

We would like now to discuss each one of these characteristics in detail, not trying to compare Islamic legislation with the law unless such a comparison is necessary, because our major goal is concerned with the Islamic legislation alone.

THE GENERAL BASIS

Islam came after all other religions had exhausted their aims, and the need arose for a message that would conclude all other messages and for a new religion that would lead humanity to a life of dignity and happiness with no differentiation between one race and another, or one nation and another, so that people would have one God only with the whole world as His temple.

The message of Islam, therefore, was the introduction of the true belief after Judaism and Christianity had conflicted in its definition causing the world to divide into many groups, disagreeing amongst themselves. It is also to be

noted that Islam aimed at defining the true system and law for the life of the individual, especially as preceding religions had been rather poor in that respect.

The basis of Islamic legislation then is God's inspiration which we find in His Gracious Book and in the Sunna of His Great Apostle. In these two origins we find everything we know in the law, civil, commercial, criminal, constitutional or international.

All scholars of legislation are bound by these two sources whenever possible unless there is place for improvisation.

The law, however as it is known and practised today is from the making of man.

That is why we find that men of law never stop studying it and explaining it as the scholars study and explain the religious Books.

We also find that scholars do not need to fail to find a solution to any problem confronting them and if they do then the fault lies with them alone.

We are here to discuss these two sources only, which we have all agreed to represent the Islamic legislation in its general outlook. This is also the doctrine of the school of *Ausentin* which says that law is the will of a higher power with unlimited supremacy. We also find that some of the Islamic legislators found it necessary to adhere to the word like the Zaheriah, who insisted on bringing the rules of legislation from the word itself.

This, however, leaves scope for many differences in the results inasmuch as some consider the law the will of a

supreme power and some consider it the will of God for the good of the one and all.

This also leaves scope for the differences in the results of a law like the Napoleonic law for example and the results of a law that adheres to the words of the Qurân and the Sunna, which are immune from fault or defection, whilst the work of man is open to defection and imperfection.

Hence we find that the opinion of Muslim scholars and legislators which says that the origin of legislation that lies in the inspiration of the Qurân is free from fault opposite to what men of law say in different explanations of the law. They believe that since its origin lies in legislation, then it is static and not liable to evolution according to time and place.

We also find that another difference is the way people look at legislation and at the law. They look upon the first as something emanating from God and worthy of respect contrary to their idea of law which is from the making of man.

Therefore the ruling of legislation acquires security and people adhere to it out of inner conviction and psychological satisfaction since it is related to God Almighty Who only decides what is good for man and his interest, and orders amity and forbids sin.

PAVING THE WAY FOR THE LAW

The aim of the law is not reached by defining it but it is verified by the way it is put to use by the people it was drawn up for. This experimentation should also be made

with the incentive of their hearts and souls. This incentive is only provided if people believe in the law and its justice.

One of the great Greek philosophers, Plato, noticed before the Christian history this very fact. If we study his two immortal works, the Republic and the Laws, we will notice that he wanted to pave the way to his utopia, so that it could appeal to the people who would live in this ideal republic which unfortunately he could not help to materialize.

As for Islamic legislation, it was very acceptable to the people since it had its basis in the Qurân and the Sunna, and since it had an ethical nature which should appeal to all, Muslims or non-Muslims. It is sufficient to draw attention to some of its principles :

A neighbour has rights towards his neighbour and duties as well. These rights and duties are sometimes not accepted by some neighbours, so they raise the matter to court where legislation is used as arbiter in the dispute.

God Almighty, the Omniscient and the Only true legislator Who knows the inner workings of the human soul, and knows the trend of selfishness that shuns in it answers the right of neighbours from each other to the extent that He ordered it as He orders the Muslims to pray for God and to believe in Him alone says : *"Serve God, and join not any partners with Him: and do good — to parents, kinsfolk, orphans, those in need, neighbours who are near, neighbours who are strangers."*

We also find that the Prophet has referred to this matter and emphasized it in many of his sayings :

He says "*Gabriel still recommends my good neighbourly relations he keeps on doing that until I thought that he will endow this neighbour. And if one believes in God and in the Day of Judgement, one should not hurt one's neighbour, and if you believe in God and the Day of Judgement, be gracious to your neighbour.*"

Then religion and legislation recommend the good neighbourly principle. Laws, then, has no say in this matter.

As for Al Zakat which is charity imposed on everything a person owns, be it money, land or cattle, we find that the Qurân implants it in the soul of the believer that Al-Zakat is for the benefit of the person who gives. God said, "*Of their goods take alms so that thou mightest purify and sanctify them.*"

We also find many sayings advising charity and showing the harsh punishment that he who abstains from it is to be exposed to. They also show the compensation that the charitable will get from God.

Defending the motherland is another aim of Islam, and every law. That is why Al Jihad (struggle) is a duty for all Muslims, to defend their countries and their religion and to spread its cause. But Islam does not call for mobilization for its own sake as is done nowadays.

God knows that most souls are rather stingy in giving of themselves as they are in giving away their wealth. That is why God tries to lead people to like Al Jihad in many ways amongst which is reminding them that it is better than this world and what it carries and that paradise is its

reward. This is mentioned in many parts of the Qurân, and in many sayings.

In these verses God said, "*Let those fight in the cause of God who sell the life of this world for the Hereafter, to him who fighteth in the Cause of God, — whether he is slain or gets victory — soon shall we give him a reward of great (value.)*"

"*God hath purchased of the believers their persons and their goods; for their (in return) is the Garden (of Paradise): They fight in His Cause, and slay and are slain.*"

We also find that the Prophet says: "*God has insured for him who fights for His caise paradise or a safe return with full reward.*" And, "*Al Jihad for the cause of God is better than the world and all it contains*".

This principle of struggling for the cause of Islam had its vast effects on the Muslims. Gaber Ibn Abdullah relates that once a man said to the Prophet, Grace and Prayers of God be upon him on the day of (Ohod): "*If I get killed where would I be?" The Prophet answered; "In Paradise*". He then threw some dates in his hand and went out to fight until he got killed.

Religion also forbids usury and has certain legislation concerning divorce and inheritance and it also urges the true proclamation of witnesses.

Legisltion contains all these principles. As for the law, certain explanations have to be made whenever people concerned with it are confronted by one of the above problems.

It is, however, necessary that after being convinced of the righteousness of legislation one should look for a law

that insures justice as well. One should succumb to such a law because by doing that one pleases God and gains mercy in this word and in the other world. We do not think that there could be a stronger incentive to obey the law.

THE REWARD IS WORLDLY AND SPIRITUAL

Law is a number of rules that help to organize social ties and a state is forced to obey these rules even if force has to be used. There is punishment for anyone who violates the law but this punishment is worldly because those who make the law have no authority in the after world. Then there is no punishment for anybody who can escape from the hand of the law in this world.

As for the law of God which is in its highest form known as Islamic legislation, the case is different. It rewards and punishes in this world and in the other world also. The punishment of God is more severe and His reward much greater. For this reason the believer has to feel strongly that he should act and live according to the laws of God, because even if he can escape the punishment of man and his law he will never be able to escape the punishment of God.

Islamic legislation, however, aims at the reformation of man and his society. This is a good aim since it wants to build an ideal society free of anything that is against religion or morals.

It also aims at the happiness and prosperity of the individual and the human race as a whole. Its goal is for man to perfect his duty towards himself and others and towards God Almighty and His worship.

ITS COMMUNAL TENDENCY

We have already mentioned that Islamic legislation aims at the happiness of one and all. Then it has a communal tendency, and when we say "communal" we do not have in mind the money and material sides only. We mean the word in a much broader sense.

This communal tendency appears in all the messages and beliefs of Islam.

We take as an example prayers, fasting, Al Zakat, Pilgrimage, and the forbidding of usury and the allowing of legal selling and buying, we also take the good neighbour policy, the fulfilment of contracts, the forbidding of adultery and so on.

All these are generalities. We should like now to bring specific examples to illustrate these generalities.

A husband has the right to have his wife in his home under his patronage and to beget children. But this right is limited inasmuch as it must not harm the wife, or else it will be lawfully stopped and a wife then has the right to ask for divorce. In this the Qurân says :

"Either take them back on equitable terms or set them free on equitable terms! but do not take them back to injure them or to take undue advantage."

It is also the privilege of a ruler to have obedience from his people, but this also is conditioned by the fact that rulers should have the good of their people in mind. In this we find that the Prophet says : *" A believer should obey as long as he is not ordered to sin. If he is ordered to sin, then he should not listen or obey."*

It is also related that Abu Obeida was once asked by some of the bedouins for some money of the state under his control. He refused, saying that the bedouin and citydweller should benefit from the money alike. Omar Ibn Abdul Aziz wrote to Yazid Ibn El-Hussein saying: "Give the soldiers their wages but give also to the city people, but beware of the bedouins because they do not attend Muslim gatherings and do not share their outlook."

It is related that when Al Imam Ibn Youssef conquered Iraq and Syria during the time of Omar Ibn El Khattab, some of the followers wanted to distribute the land gained amongst the invading Muslims, but Omar refused, leaving the land in the hands of its owners and levying taxes on them.

It is also recognized that the owner has absolute freedom to dispense with his property as he sees fit. He could sell and the buyer could buy. Islamic legislation, however, gave the right of buying to a partner or a neighbour, even if the owner wants to sell to someone else, because rights are given to benefit not to harm.

Islamic legislation preserves the rights of man provided that these rights do not infringe, on the rights of others, realizing thus the principle which says :

"No harm and no harming. If necessary then the lighter harm is executed." This rule governs the way rights are to be obtained.

According to this rule spiritual law allows a person to dig in the land of someone else so that he can get water to irrigate his own land. Yehia Ibn Adam Al Korashi related that Al Dakkak Ibn Khalifa Al Ansary owned land which

had no access to water except through a garden owned by Muhammed Ibn Maslamah. Muhammad refused the passage of water through his garden. Al-Dakkak went to Omar Ibn El Khattab who asked Ibn Maslamah : " Does the passage of water harm you ? " He replied : " No. " Omar answered " If, by God, the only passage were over your belly. I would let water pass. " And it was done, with no harm to either one of the two. It is also related that Al-Dakkak told Ibn Maslamah that he was after all going to drink from the water that passed through his garden.

All these examples are of the communal aspect in Islalamic legislation and they are found in the Qurân and in the Sunnâ.

As for man-made laws they did not at the begining observe this communal aspect, but they were rather tending to look at the individual. An example of this is the French civil law issued in 1804.

This law was the offspring of the French Revolution, which aimed at liberating the individual from the fetters that bound him in all aspects of life, political, legal and economical. This Revolution came in the year 1889 to prove that man as an individual has sacred rights which should not be tampered with for the benefit of others.

Then this individual line of thinking prevailed, to be followed by the spirit which dictated the rights of man as being the most important element in life, not as being part of a community. That is why there came a time when liberties were unlimited and a person could use them with no restrictions. After the French Revolution it is only rightful to say that the social developments that happened

on a very large scale called for a change of outlook. The individual was looked upon as part of a vast community of individuals. His liberties were restricted, as a consequence of which the theory of the Abuse of Rights appeared.

Despite this it remained undisputed that the outlook of Islamic legislation is far sighted and more shrewed than the modern laws. These, for example, allow usury which is for the benefit of the lender and to the harm of the borrower.

It is believed that this discrepancy between the Godly legislation and the man-made law comes from the difference between the rights of the individual in the two.

The law, at the beginning, considered the rights of man his own to use or abuse as he liked. As for legislation it considers that man is owned by God Almighty alone, and that all his rights are only granted for a sound reason, meaning the realization of good for all mankind. That is why all these rights are in some way restricted by the legislation of God.

Consequently a man should do as God legislates and should use his rights within the bounds drawn out for him by the Almighty, because within these bounds lies the happiness and prosperity of the human race. If man deviates from these boundaries, then his actions are against legislation and goals.

ITS ADAPTATION TO EVOLUTION

Every kind of legislation should be lenient enough to accept evolution according to place and time. Otherwise it

would be a dead and useless legislation which would not correspond to life.

Islamic legislation has all the above qualities. That is why it remained immortal, progressing with time. We have already mentioned some aspects of its evolution in the time of the Khalifs. If legislation remained static, the Islamic nation would have no need for resort to Western legislation, taking from it what they needed and what they did not find because of some neglect on the part of those who had Islamic legislation in hand.

Thus we started taking from the West, forgetting that we are a nation with its own qualities and its own highly esteemed traditions. Today, by the grace of God, we see a new dawn for a new era, when we work for our independence even in legisaltion by going back to Islamic legislation and making use of it.

The methods by which Islamic legislation develops are many. The most important of them are unanimity, relativity, acceptance, the principle of exchanging and accepting benefits and the observance of the recognized rules of ethics. It is sufficient to discuss here this last method, how it began, what it is, how the Apostle looked upon it, and its many examples in different places and times. 'Al Orf' or this rule of ethics means anything that happens regularly. We say people come after each other (Orfan) in a conitnuous way. It originates from habit, which is an inherent quality in man due to the continuous happening of certain good things. A habit is a thing recognized and agreed upon by the people of a certain nation owing to its religion or its history or to its traditions.

This habitual rules of conduct has its strong influence on man. He has to bow to it, although sometimes he might not approve of all its aspects. An example of that is the rites of marriage and death when people have to follow certain rules which they detest because they are afraid of being shamed among their fellow citizens.

We find for that reason the Prophet, the Grace of God upon him, approving some aspects of the habitual rules, especially the one concerning dealings between people, like selling and speculating.

Fakhr El Dine Al Zelaié relates concerning speculation that the Prophet, grace and prayers of God upon him, came to find that it was the practice of the people. So he allowed it. The disciples and the followers practised it too. It is also related that Abbas Ibn Abdul Mottaleb conditioned that his speculation money should not be used across the sea or the valley, meaning that any benefit should be restricted to the place of speculation. This the Prophet also approved.

Sometimes a dispute arises concerning this rule of habit. The word of the legislators is not usually adhered to, owing to their lack of knowledge about circumstances prevailing in a certain time or place. A legislator should be up-to-date concerning the habits and conduct of people before deciding on a certain matter.

An example of this is the late opinion which allows payment for teaching the Qurân and for performing the call to prayer, contrary to the opinion of Imam Abu Hanifa and his followers, for fear that once there is no payment there will be no teaching of the Qurân or of religion.

Another example is the opinion that allows the selling of fruit and vegetables whilst on the trees even if they have not fully grown at the time of selling. Another example is the forbidding of a guardian to invest the money of the orphan under his guardianship, and the forbidding of women to attend a communal prayer in any mosque although this last was allowed in the time of the Apostle.

From all the examples we can see how legislation is open to progress and how the books of legislation are full of such examples.

That is a very good reason why, in a time of legislative progress like the present time, we should not be tied by static frozen rules, but it is our duty to walk side by side with progress and to correspond truly to the circumstances we live in as long as we do not deviate from the aim of legislation or violate the rules of religion.

THE AIM OF LEGISLATION

Every system has its aim and purpose or else it would be a waste of time to try to apply it. The law is a system. What is the goal of the legislator in outlining the law ? It is easy to answer this question. The aim is the security of the community for which this law is defined, by showing the rights of the individual and his duties in relation to his fellow citizens.

This aim is definite and limited. And the legislator sticks to it even if sometimes he has to deviate from the way of ethics or religion. The law, for example, approves the fact that if a person lays hands on a piece of land which

is not his for a period of 15 years it becomes his own. The real owner loses his right to it through the years, ignoring thus any rule of ethics or morals.

Then law allows certain procedures that do not comply with religion or morals.

As for legislation, we find that it differs in the sense that it organizes the relation of the individual to his God through rituals like prayers, fasting, Al Zakat, and the pilgrimage, which all aim at the purification of the soul and its linking with God Almighty. It also aims at the reformation of the individual and the community in many respects in this and the other world.

Legislation has set up certain rules which govern the behaviour of man and which show that stopping evil is preferable even to having any gain. As for the general rules and principles, many books have been written on that.

Amongst these is a book written by Al Imam Al Shatby which stresses that the prevention of sin is preferred to the obtaining of gain. This book contains many examples of that, of which we do not see fit to mention all here.

It is enough to show that a person is legally forbidden to do a thing which is originally permitted for him, if by his doing it anyone else would be harmed or if a general harm would happen as its consequence. In Islam no harming or harm are allowed and general good is preferable to private interest.

As we mentioned before, usury is forbidden by God Almighty and anyone who practices it is threatened with the worst kind of punishment : " *But God hath permitted*

trade and forbidden usury." — *"O ye who believe! Fear God, and give up what remains of your demand for usury, if ye are indeed believers.. If ye do it not, take notice of war from God and His Prophet: but if ye turn back, ye shall have your capital sums: deal not unjustly, and ye shall not be dealt with unjustly."*

The Prophet also forbade the selling of birds which are not within the reach of the hand of the seller and of fish in water before their being caught or the selling of vegetables and crops whilst on the trees, and the selling of a lost vehicle or a stray animal. These are also forbidden by the legislation because they entail a gamble to both buyer and seller alike.

The Prophet also says: "One should not sell anything already sold by someone else, because this would entail harm and Islam does not allow harm or harming."

Besides all this we find the same tendency in the administrative part. Legislators refer to the Holy Qurân in everything concerning this.

We take one example of this. It is concerned with the different administrative posts in the state.

It is understood that positions in a state are given to those who are capable of undertaking them. The qualification for that as we know is the scholarly degree.

In Islamic legislation, though, the criterion is real fitness, not degrees or knowledge alone. This means that the head of a state should assign the right man to the right position, provided he believes that he is the best person to undertake the work. Regarding this the Prophet says "If any Muslim wants to hand the leadership to someone who

is not fit, or if he overlooks a better one, he is betraying God and His Prophet."

Taky El Dine Ibn Timieh says in some of his books. "The head of a state should know the best man for every position; because leadership has two cornerstones: Power and Honesty."

"Truly the best of men for thee to employ is the (man) who is strong and trusty."

Then he goes on to mention that power is represented in warfare and honesty is rare in man, so if a state uses a man of war it should have one who is to be preferred to the weak and helpless, even though the latter be more honest than the brave. If the position calls for a man with honesty to preserve funds then the honest person is to be preferred, and so on.

As regards the social side we find that Islamic legislation has a system to help the needy unequalled in any other law, meaning Al Zakat which in itself is a section of the religious ritual of Islam.

God the Great Legislator knows that people differ as regards money and wealth and the difference is sometimes very great. That is why God has imposed on the rich a certain rule which makes part of their wealth a right of the poor. History very truthfully relates what Omar Ibn El Khattab and the other pioneers of Islam did to enforce this rule.

We know that during their time gifts were given to mothers and then children. These gifts increased with the increase of numbers of sons and daughters in the family. These gifts were given from what they then called the

House of Money or what is synonymous with the Treasury today.

History also tells us that Al Zakat extended even to embrace the needy among non-Muslims also. Omar Ibn El Khattab once saw a man begging. He asked him why he begged, and when the man told him that he was forced to beg he said: "We did not give him credit; we ate away his youth and when he grew old we left him lost." He then ordered that any tax should not be lifted from this man and for him and his sons to be given what should keep them in comfort throughout their stay in the land of Islam.

We thus know that Islamic legislation has given this side of charity its due. It is a legislation that should very rightfully be an example for any modern law or legislation in our country and in any other country of the Arabs and of Islam.

- THE GENERAL BASIS OF LEGISLATION

God created the world and sent His Prophets to guide its people in the way of good and keep them away from the way of evil. Every Prophet was sent to his people and nation. Every Prophet had his limited time and people.

The case remained so until humanity was prepared to accept an immortal message, the Islamic message, after all the other messages had been absorbed and their religions exhausted, and when they had become inadequate to meet the needs of man until the day of Judgement.

If the Islamic Message is the last Godly message, and if its Prophet is the last of the Prophets, and if the logical

consequence of that is that it is a message addressed to all the people, then it should contain legislation which ought to make it useful to humanity throughout the ages.

This is a true fact, for the bases of Islamic legislation are useful to all people and at all times. These bases are . It is an easy legislation which does not impose anything beyond the capacity or power of humanity. It attends to the good of all the people. It ensures the realization of justice in its full capacity. To prove all this we would like to relate what the Qurân says : " God does not wish to place you in a difficulty". — "And has imposed no difficulties on your religion. " — " It is no fault in the blind nor in one born lame, nor in one afflicted with illness. " — " God intends every facility for you. " — " God *does* wish to lighten your (difficulties) : for man was created weak (in flesh) ".

We thus see that God, the gracious, who knows the difference that exists between humans in matters of health, wealth, weakness and force, has lifted many embarrassment from people accordingly.

These facilities are very apparent in many aspects of religion, some in the way people deal with each other, some in punishment. To illustrate all this we would like to mention the following :

In prayers, for example, we find that a Muslim can pray very easily. We find that if a person is traveling he can perform his prayers in a way which befits this case. A man is allowed to break his fast if he is not well or if he is travelling. He can dispense with water for washing before prayers if he cannot find it. He is even allowed to drink alcohol and eat pork if he has to.

Regarding the Pilgrimage, a man who cannot afford the expenses is exempted. The pilgrimage is imposed only once during a lifetime and it is only imposed on those who can afford it.

It is related that the Prophet, Prayers of God be upon him, was preaching pilgrimage when a man asked him : " How many times should a man go on the pilgrimage every year ? The Prophet did not answer, and the man asked three times.

On the fourth time, the Prophet answered :

If I say "yes", it would mean that you have to go every year. I do not like you to attribute to me what I did not say.

"" O ye who believe ! Ask not questions about things which, if made plain to you, may cause you trouble. But if ye ask about things when the Qurân is being revealed, they will be made plain to you, God will forgive those : for God is Oft-Forgiving, Most Forbearing. Some people before you did ask such questions, and on that account lost their faith".

Al Zakat was also imposed on those who can do it, who have a surplus of money or crops. It is only one-tenth or half of the tenth. This proportion is very little when compared to the taxes collected by modern governments now adays.

As for relations between people we find that ease is their utmost rule. A contract could be drawn up between two people without the complications of the Romans. The Qurân only mentions one condition for any agreement

between two persons. This is their acceptance of such an agreement. To prove this the Qurân says :

" O ye who believe! Eat not up your property among yourselves in vanities : but let there be amongst you traffic and trade by mutual good-will".

As for punishment, there are also limits to it, and suspicion is not enough to prove the sin of adultery, or libel or theft or drinking alcohol. In this the Prophet says, *" Try to keep your fellow Muslim away from sin. If you can help him out of it do so, and do not punish him, because it is better to err in forgiveness than to err in punishment. "*

It is also related that the Prophet brought along a thief who had stolen and confessed but on whom nothing had been found. The Prophet said to him : " I do not think you have stolen ." The man said: " But I did" The Prophet repeated his word twice and three times and the man confessed, so he was punished. A thief who steels something he claims to be his own is forgiven.

Another proof that God Almighty wanted to facilitate things for us is that He relieved us of many of the severe punishments that He threatened the Jews with as a consequence of their aggressiveness and despotism. Referring to this the Qurân says :

" For the iniquity of the Jews we made unlawful for them certain (foods), good and wholesome, which had been lawful for them; — In that they hindered many from God's Way ; " — " For those who followed the Jewish Law, we forbade every (animal) with undivided hoof, and We forbade them the fat of the ox and the sheep except what adheres

to their backs or their entrails, or is mixed up with a bone; this in recompense for their wilful disobedience; for We are True (in Our ordinances)." "But My Mercy extendeth to all things. That (Mercy) I shall ordain for those who do right, and practise regular charity, and those who believe in Our Signs; Those who follow the Prophet, the unlettered Prophet; when they find mentioned in their own Scriptures); — In the Law and the Gospel; — For he commands them what is just and forbids them what is evil, he allows them as lawful what is good (and pure) and prohibits them from what is bad (and impure), He releases them from their heavy burdens and from the Yokes that are upon them".

"Say: O my Servants who have transgressed against their souls! Despair not of the Mercy of God; for God forgives all sins; for He is (Oft Forgiving) Most Merciful"

Then the mercy of God has enveloped everybody and everything. His call for forgiveness for those who repent is unmistakable, but there is also severe punishment and there is forbidding to taste alcohol or the flesh of the dead and of the pigs. Opposite that we find that God has imposed on the Jews many severe rules and much severe legislations.

Some scholars explain this by saying that in Judaism there is no forgiveness even with repentance, there is no work on Saturday, there is no acceptance for ransom in place of revenge there is no benefit out of the victory of war, there is order to kill oneself as a sign of repentance of a sin All this and the forbidding of eating many kinds of meats and fats can be compared with His Graciousness towards Muslims and their legislation.

ATTENTION TO THE COMMUNAL INTEREST

It is enough to say in praise of Islamic legislation that it had the interest of the community in mind, with no difference of race or nation. The Qurân mentions that Islam came as a mercy to all people, since His Prophet is the Prophet of all.

Here also lies the difference between Islamic Legislation and man-made laws; every nation has its laws and every race has its law, whilst Islamic legislation can be used for all humanity.

The law has two principles which make it valid :

1. — Territoriality, meaning that a law is to be enforced on the people living in a certain territory.

2. — Personality of the law meaning that it is to be enforced on citizens of a country even those outside it, whilst it cannot be enforced on foreigners living in that particular country.

Islamic legislation does not comply with these two principles, except in very special cases. Muslims all over the world are addressed by Islamic legislation, no matter where they live.

Islam is the religion of Muslims in all territories.

As for non-Muslims, we find that legislators differ as to whether they too are to be addressed through the Islamic legislation or not, or whether they should follow part of it and leave part of it. Ibn Abdine says :

" The opinion is that unbelievers are also preached Islamic legislation, they are asked to abstain from any thing

or from exposing themselves to heavy drinking of alcohol because they, the unbelievers, believe it is allowed. The people of Samarkand refused Islamic legislation, saying they did not believe in it theoretically or practically. The people of Bakhara refused it practically, but accepted it theoretically. The unbelievers of Iraq accepted it wholly, they also accepted punishment for violating it.

Then we think that non-Muslims are supposed to adhere to Islamic legislation in all aspects except those dealing with prayers. We do not ask them to change those. This is to be left to the day of punishment.

The Islamic legislation is meant for all nations and creeds because it aims at the good of humanity. In this the Imam El Shatby says: " We have found by research that the legislation aims at the good of humanity. Within this framework the usual rulings revolve. We find that sometimes it bans something which begets no profit and sometimes it passes it when there is good in it.. Borrowing, for example, is allowed, but usury is not. "

Sometimes the benefit and the loss collide. But the general benefit is the thing legislation aims at; the lesser harm is perferred to the more serious one.

Another example is the allowing sometimes of the confiscation of the property of people to widen a road or to make an improvement which produces a general interest or benefit. A needy relation has a right to maintenance from his better-off relative, an indebted person who is rich is forced to pay his debt, even through imprisonment. Al Zakat is obligatory on all wealthy or well-to-do persons, and so on.

On the other hand, legislation forbids alcohol, gambling, usury, deceit in dealings. All these rulings are laid down to preserve money and mind and to strengthen the brotherhood of man.

THE REALIZATION OF JUSTICE TO ALL

It would be a waste of time to try to prove that Islamic legislation preserves the right of man, not Muslim man alone, but all men, even the enemy in times of actual war with us. Islamic legislation fully details the rights of man and of the community in a way that makes all safe and secure.

The Qurân and the Sunnâ are full of words that oblige people to be just and to practise justice. The Qurân forbids persecution, and threatens to punish any who contemplate using it. If we read the Qurân we find that the word "justice" and all its derivatives in that sense are mentioned more than twenty times. The word "persecution" and its derivatives are mentioned about 299 times. The word " aggression ", is mentioned 8 times while the words "attack" or "violate" are mentioned twenty times.

We will mention some of the sayings of the Qurân : " God commands justice, the doing of good, and liberality to kith and kin, and He forbids all shameful deeds, and injustice and rebellion". — *"God does command you to render back your Trusts to those to whom they are due; and when ye judge between man and man, that ye judge with justice."* — *" O ye who believe ! Stand out firmly for justice, as witnesses to God, even as against yourselves, or your parents, or your kin, and whether it be (against) rich or poor : for*

God can best protect both. Follow not the lusts (of your hearts), lest ye swerve". — *" O ye who believe! Stand out firmly for God as witnesses to fair dealing, and let not the hatred of others to you make you swerve to wrong and depart from justice. Be just: that is next to piety and fear God."*

From all the above we see how careful the Qurân is to raise justice among people even if we have to give witness against ourselves and the nearest to us, and how it forbids us to be unjust out of hate of some people, because justice is the solid basis on which life is erected and without it life cannot go on. We want to end this chapter by pointing out two things :

1. — Legislation, which has justice as its basis, is an ideal legislation which treats all people alike, no master and slave, no low and high. And this is Islamic legislation which has no consideration for the nobility of birth or for wealth. The only weighing amongst people is of the strength of their faith. The Qurân says :

" *Verily the most honoured of you in the sight of God is (he who is) the most religious of you".*

And the Prophet says: "*No Arab is preferred to a non-Arab unless he is more faithful."*

It is related that Osama Ibn Zeid once wanted to ask the Prophet forgiveness for a woman who had been caught stealing. The Prophet said : " *You want to violate one of God's rules; those before us perished because they left a big influential man to go free if he stole, and if they caught a weak one punished him. By God, if my own daughter Fa'ma Bint Muhammad stole, I would punish her."*

2. — The law limits itself to realizing justice, not equality. Justice calls for punishment according to circumstances that exist in life generally, not looking at minor details that could change two simiiar cases. Equality believes in complete studying of details in both cases. Anybody who is laying down the law cannot prophecy the similar details in any two cases. Islamic legislation is laid down by God Almighty, the Omniscient, to last till the end of the world.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE FUTURE OF ISLAMIC LEGISLATION

What do we want out of Islamic legislation ?

Now that we know all about it, that we know that it led humanity in the right way for centuries, we only want one thing, and we have the right to ask for it. We want this Islamic legislation to be the basis for all the laws we believe in. There is, however, no harm in benefitting from the laws of other nations. Perhaps it is even our duty to do so, because all nations need each other in one way or another.

When we ask for this, we are not asking for something unusual. We are asking actually for one aspect of the independence each nation fights for. Nothing is more harmful than intellectual imperialism or legal servitude to any other nation.

It is understood that the law is the base of any system on which a nation is built; it is not wise for a nation to borrow that base from another, the tradition and history and religion of which might differ from its own.

We also know that we cannot realize all this in a short time. Islamic legislation passed through a phase of stagnation and freezing. We should be given time to get out of this phase and start on the way of progress. This also calls for constant hard work.

We should not wince in the face of this vast responsibility or despair of reaching our goal. If we look to see the position of this Islamic legislation in relation to the law, we will be encouraged on our way, knowing very well that we will reach our aim, by God's will.

THE STATE OF ISLAMIC LEGISLATION IN THE RECENT PAST

Islamic legislation was, until a very short time ago, isolated from justice in the courts if we exempt what they called the "personal status," meaning marriage, divorce, inheritance and wills. As for the administration of matters of state in a general way, it was kept within the walls of Al-Azhar and the other institutes attached to it. Nobody cared to study it in a scientific way since there was no need for it in the official law, and since it was only needed in the legislative courts.

All this happened after we adopted the French Laws and called them civil laws. This took place at the end of the 19th century when the "civil collections" appeared in the year 1883. We were then interested in a foreign kind of legislation, a legislation occupied by a foreigner, as Al Sanhouri wrote 20 years ago :

" We must first of all Egyptianize legislation and give it our national colouring. Our legislation today is occupied by the foreigner. It is an occupation no less dangerous or serious than any other kind of occupation. The Egyptian legislation still goes to the French code for advice. It never wavers from its horizon or deviates from its path. It is its shadow and honest follower. "

ISLAMIC LEGISLATION TODAY

That was the state of Islamic legislation in the recent past. Today we have taken very good strides towards our goal. These strides have their reasons; they also have their aspects.

The nation felt very deeply the impact of foreign occupation and the shame of it, military or intellectual. It arose asking for independence using all methods and ways. Some of its legal leaders said that the time was ripe for Egyptianizing the law by which we rule and judge. We wish to God they had said it should be Islamic. But they overlooked that and wanted it national and corresponding to our mentality, they went on this road of independence using methods which they thought were efficient.

This was also accompanied by a very strong national feeling which called for Islamic rule, saying that Islam is a nation and a religion at the same time, because of what it contained of useful laws to govern humanity in all its aspects.

There is no wonder at this statement since Islamic legislation has everything to make us dispense with the West and its system. On this Sheikh Hassan El-Banna said :

" Every nation has its own law which its citizens recognize and respect. This law of ours should be derived from Islamic legislation, taken from the Qurân and agreeing with the origin of Islam. Islamic legislation has everything we need in life.

" God has laid down the limits that punish a criminal even if he is long accustomed to crime: God's legislation can

relieve governments from fallible experiments. Experience proved that and God imposes it."

We think that there is a third reason which caused men of law here to revert to Islamic legislation and to benefit from it. That is the high praise attributed to Islamic legislation by men of law and their praise of it in many of their conventions in The Hague, Nice and Paris.

The interest of Westerners in the Islamic heritage dates back to the Middle Ages, when they wanted to find out the source of Islamic greatness and leadership. Another reason might have come with the 19th century with colonialism when colonists wanted to know the history and tradition of the peoples who were pestered with their occupation. Many books were translated dealing with Islam and its legislation.

This interest exists until today and we find many books translated by the orientalists besides some of their own leading with Islamic culture and legislation.

This interest on the part of Westerners in Islamic culture and Islamic legislation was an incentive for our men of law to believe fully in its efficiency and to start studying it and making use of it.

These are the reasons; as for the aspects of this transition we can sum it up in the following :

Many students of law started writing researches and thesis on Islamic legislation. Among them are Dr. Shafik Shehatta in his book "The Theory of Obligations in Islamic legislation"; Dr. El Said Moustapha El Said in his book "The Extent of Marital Rights and the limits of it in Islamic Legislation and Modern Egyptian Law"; Dr. Sobhi El Hommosany in his book "The Theory of Duties and Contracts";

and Dr. Muhammad Zaki Abdul Bar in his book "Responsibility in Islamic Legislation."

Other studies include books like "Islamic Criminal legislation, and "Islam and our legal status" by Dr. Abdel Kader Ouda.

Another reason is that Islamic legislation became an official origin of the new civil law, so its study was obligatorv by men of law and justice, and the reference to it became prevalent.

As regards the first point Dr. Sanhouri says, after pointing out what the new law kept from Islamic legislation :

"The new law introduces new rulings derived from Islamic legislation. Some of these rulings are general principles. Some are detailed." Among the general principles he took is the subjective tendency which prevails in most of its items. This subjective tendency is usually found in Islamic legislation and in Germanic laws, a tendency preferred to the personal leanings of the Latin laws. Islamic legislation is also based on balancing a view and taking the more probable rather than the less probable.

Another principle is that the new law did not apply the theory of prejudice in using rights. Islamic law never looked at the personal side of a matter, but rather preferred to add a subjective one, and a more universal view.

As regards religion we find that Latin laws have completely overlooked them while Germanic law and the Islamic legislation have put a system for it and organized it. The principle of sudden happenings (imprévision) is also observed by some of the modern laws. The new law also

agreed to observe it because Islamic legislation believes in the theory of necessity and excuse.

Among the detailed rulings that the new law took from Islamic legislation are the ruling concerning contracts and the one concerning 'Waqf' and monopoly, and the one concerning the leasing of land and the one concerning the perishing of crops on that land, and the one that says a contract ends with the death of one of the contractors and that it ends for one excuse.

Dr. Sanhouri also says, regarding the extensive study of Islamic legislation, after it became an official source for the new law: "This, undoubtedly, gives Islamic legislation a bigger importance. It is also necessary to study Islamic legislation on a scientific method as regards contemporary and competitive laws so that its practice will be much easier. The scholars and the judges are now asked to complete the rulings of civil law. If they have no other source they should then revert to Islamic legislation. They should actually revert to Islamic legislation because it is more accurate than the common rules of justice."

Lastly, there was an idea which says that Islamic legislation should be the basis of all our laws after its crystallization in the minds of men of law. Dr. Sanhouri in another thesis says :

"The aim is to develop Islamic legislation in such a way as to make it possible to derive from it a law which suits our time.

"The new Egyptian law or the new Iraqi law are laws suitable for our times. This is the civil law which is derived from Islamic legislation and which is suitable for all

Arab nations. When a final law is agreed upon, Arab unity will be there, and the law will be an aspect of this unity, and a symbol of it."

HOW TO REACH THIS AIM :

It is a well-known saying that one does not usually get what one wants, and it is not enough to wish, but this wish should be strengthened until it became a will. Then one should start removing obstacles from one's way until one reaches one's aim.

We want Islamic legislation to be the basis of our laws in the future. We also want a unified Arab law for all the Arab countries. This is not an easy thing. The way is full of obstacles. It calls for serious, continuous work We should not stand still and wait for this wish to be fulfilled. But all people of law should carry the burden courageously and try to get where we want.

All the origins of Islamic legislation should be published and studied by scholars. Other books dealing with legislation should also be published. We should not stick to the four known sects but we should study other sects, like those of El Zaydia, El Emamia, and the Shiâa and the Zaheri sect. All these sects contain treasures of legislation, which ought to benefit us in our legislation and social renaissance.

Once we know everything about Islamic legislation in all the sects, we should study it on completely new lines, different from those used in Al Azhar. We should compare it with other contemporary legislation, and with contemporary laws.

This study will help us to free ourselves from the curse of imitation which has so far taken hold of us. Studying Islamic legislation will offer very fertile material to the modern law which will be of immense use to them.

Apart from that we would be contributing to the efforts of the human mind in the field of legislation. We would be showing the development of universal thought as far as legislation is concerned, and showing its acceptance of progress to suit the circumstances of daily life and their continual fluctuation.

We have expressed this view two years ago and we call upon men of law to join hands with their fellow legislators to study and produce the ideal law in its two sections, the general and the personal.

If this happens we will find in Islamic legislation everything that will spare us the trouble of borrowing from foreign laws, and we will be able ever soon by God's will to have a unified Islamic law for all the Arab Countries .

THE NECESSITY OF IMPROVISATION

Despite all this we should open the door for all those who would like to improvise, because rigidity was one cause of the stagnation that attacked Islamic legislation. We should make good use of our legislative heritage.

Rigidity means death, and movement is the first sign of life. The Qurân forbids false imitation. God has forbidden the Imams themselves to imitate. On this El Shafei says :

" An imitator is like someone who imitates a forester carrying a bundle of straw at night and not knowing that it contains a snake that will bite him. " Ismail Ibn Yahia El Mazni mentions that he abridged the knowledge of El-Shafei to make it comprehensible to those who want to study it warning them that they should not imitate him or any other Imam and beware.

We should, however, differentiate between this forbidden imitation, and the following. The Qurân says : " The vanguard (of Islam) — the first of those who forsake (their homes) and of those who gave them aid, and (also) those who follow them in (all good deals). "

This shows that imitation here is accepted by God. If we follow the emigrants and the followers in adopting their legislation and their Sunna, then we are doing what God wants. There is a great difference between the two kinds of imitation.

Abu Dawoud mentions that he heard Al Imam Ibn Hanbal say : " Following what is known of the Prophet, Prayers of God be upon him, is accepted" and he also said: " Do not imitate me and do not imitate Malek, but try to understand the source where they got their knowledge. "

To-day we only imitate some of the backward legislators, and we make their opinions laws.

There is another important point that we should never overlook. This is that the old legislators looked at their religion and their nation and at themselves as part of the circumstances they lived in them. Their problems and misfortunes were limited by their time. They did all they could to find the right legislation for all these.

But times change, and dealings develop. Today there exist many problems that could not by any means have existed in their times. We should not stand with our hands tied saying that our legislators have not found a ruling for this problem or that. We should work at finding a solution, making use of their efforts, and depending before everything else on God's Book and His Prophets Sunnâ.

Such dealings are those concerned with stock-exchange, the cotton-market, the contracts concerning the selling and marketing of any other agricultural product, and the work of the co-operative societies, like giving loans to farmers, all matters of economy and finance, and all matters concerning insurance companies and the like.

Another aspect that has changed is the way nations are governed, and the need to govern them in a way that goes side by side with progress and development.

To get the best result, we should have a special institute for legislation, the same as the one for language, which does great services to the Qurân.

There is no doubt that legislation problems are more intricate and complicated than language problems. A single person working independently could not carry the burden of tackling them alone.

Cairo, being the centre of Islamic legislation, should be very much interested in such a proposal. Steps should be taken to form this institute which would consist of all high men of legislation in all the Islamic Countries.

This institute, once it is formed, should prepare every year the problems that should be studied and should also

show the ruling of Islamic legislation concerning each one of them.

Then each member would study the problem while in his own country. Then the members should all meet once a year, in Cairo, or in any other Islamic capital, to discuss and expose their views, so that they could issue an unanimous decision to be used.

All their decisions should be regarded as Islamic legislation, to which Muslims should adhere with no opposition.

If we accomplish this task, if we study scientifically in cooperation with men of law the Islamic legislation, and if we try to find the ruling of legislation in dealings and in the general basis of administration, if we do all that, we will put Islamic legislation in its right place and make it the origin and basis of our laws.

God Almighty help us to reach all good.

PART VII

THE ENDS OF ISLAM



CHAPTER ONE

THE EDUCATION OF THE INDIVIDUAL

It is only natural that all religions known to us, all philosophies and social systems, should achieve certain ends for the happiness of mankind. Islam, to which we adhere and call all people to adopt, has the most exalted human aims.

In the following three chapters we shall deal with these ends. The first will deal with the education of the individual, the second with social reform, the third with world peace.

It is quite known to us that individuals are the units which build up their society. So the right education of the individual will inevitably lead to the building up of a healthy social order. And hence we find that Islam has given prime importance to the education of the individual. The emphasis laid on this point is indeed unprecedented in any other religion — especially because of its comprehensive and detailed treatment.

Man has a body and a soul. He has his inveterate natural instincts together with a mind which makes him different from animals. Islam, recognizing this, gives each its due share of satisfaction. The body is not to be exhausted or deprived of any satisfaction at the expense of the spirit

or the mind. Islam tells us to satisfy our desires and instincts in a lawful manner and never to stifle them.

Physical health, therefore, is a question of high importance in Islam. Man has to protect himself against diseases and to cure himself in case of illness. The sanctity of life is indeed stressed by Islam. In case of necessity one can preserve his life in any possible way, even by eating a dead animal, or having any alcoholic drink. Those whose physical health does not permit them to fast are allowed to eat and drink and so on.

We are allowed also to enjoy the lawful pleasures of life, thus satisfying the desires of our souls. We have to be disciplined and nicely dressed but not to indulge in extravagance which tends to vulgarity. On this point God sheds more light in the "Sura" of "AL AARAF" :

" O Children of Adam ! wear your beautiful apparel at every time and place of prayer : eat and drink : but waste not by excess, for God loveth not the Wasters, Say : Who hath forbidden the beautiful (gifts) of God, which He hath produced for His servants, and the things, clean and pure, (which He hath provided) for sustenance ? Say : They are, in the life of His world, for those who believe (and) purely for them on the Day of Judgement. Thus do we explain the Signs in detail for those who understand."

God, moreover, reminds us of his favours, of the goods of the earth which we enjoy and which beautify our life and fill it with delight. In the Sura of EL-NAHL, we have such verses as :

" And cattle He has created for you (men): from them Ye derive warmth, and numerous benefits, and of their

(meat) ye eat. And ye have a sense of pride and beauty in them as ye drive them home in the evening, and as ye lead them forth to pasture in the morning. And they carry your heavy loads to lands that ye could not (otherwise) reach except with souls distressed: for your **Master** *is indeed Most Kind, Most Merciful. And (He has created) horses, mules, and donkeys for you to ride and use for show; and He has created (other) things of which ye have no knowledge".*

And : "*It is He who has made the sea subject, that ye may eat thereof flesh that is fresh and tender, and that ye may extract therefrom ornaments to wear; and thou seest the ships therein that plough the waves, that ye may seek (thus) of the bounty of God and that ye may be grateful".*

Islam in recognizing the human instincts and man's claim to satisfy them, does allow women to beautify themselves, wear silk dresses and jewels while forbidding men to beautify themselves at all since it is against the nature of man who is supposed to be dignified and respectable. Human beings are, however, basically different from animals since they possess certain mental powers which determine the human element in them. Islam, naturally, cares very much for the education of these mental powers which lead to human perfection.

In the holy Qurân, we find verses which indicate this end — such as " By the soul, and the proportion and order given to it; and its enlightenment as to its wrong and its right; truly he succeeds that purifies it, and he fails that corrupts it ! " The verses indicate, moreover, that God, wise as He is, endowed man with a perfect soul, and showed him right and wrong — leaving him to follow either of them he chooses but being held responsible at the end for his choice.

God indicates also that the winners are only those who purify their souls through virtuous deeds, while the losers are those who cannot control their desires and so tend to evil.

Islam, therefore, implied that man should curb his desires in order to have the heavenly reward of eternal paradise. In the "Sura" of "El-Naziaat", the following verses point this out : " And for such as had entertained the fear of standing before their Lords' (tribunal) and had restrained (their) soul from lower Desires, their Abode will be the garden ".

The Prophet of God once said to some returning warriors "Welcome ! You have finished with a minor warfare and launched into a major battle ! " When asked about the nature of this battle he said " It is the fifth, against your soul's desires".

On this point he said on another occasion : " The true warrior for the cause of God is he who can resist his own desires and obey God ".

Once man succeeds in subduing his desires his conflicting human faculties will attain a state of harmony and reconciliation. And, consequently, all virtues will be there, in his peace of mind and body. These virtues can be said to spring from four major virtues which are the essence of all good : wisdom, courage, chastity, justice. (1)

Through education morals can be improved. And hence emerges the great need for messengers, prophets and social

(1) Each one of these four virtues is a mother, as it were, of other virtues which come under it and are parts of it. But this is another point and should be treated elsewhere.

reformers and we remember that the Prophet of God told us to "improve (our) morals". And so man must watch his behaviour and be careful not to deviate from the path of right and virtue. One must not be driven to extremes and therefore must punish himself if he is wrong or reward himself when right. This judgement of one's deeds is highly important since it reveals to man his attitude towards the lofty human ideals, and determines whether his psychological state will be happy or otherwise.

Just as merchants keep their accounts and depend on their account-books for their commercial success, man must keep a just account of his deeds and depend on that in his quest for happiness.

In brief, Islam aims at the education of man's conscience that he may be righteous and distinguish good from evil, even though in the affairs of practical life he may not find a text or tradition for each particular case. He will act according to the dictates of his own conscience regardless of whatever his society may think of him.

In this respect it is reported that Wabisa Ibn Maabad said that he went to see the Prophet, who said to him : "Have you come to ask about righteousness ? " Ibn Maabad said, " Yes ".

The Prophet of God then said to him : " Righteousness is what is within your heart; evil is also what is within your heart, though others may advise you differently. "

When man enjoys that peace and quietude of conscience, righteousness will always accompany his deeds. He will be independent in all his actions, however filthy this society may be.

The Prophet of God ordered us to be independent in thought and action saying, "Do not be 'yes men', nor blindly follow others in right and wrong. Be independent and always for right. If people do wrong do not follow, and if right you still are right."

The holy Qurân, being the chief reference book of Islam, throws light on human virtues and vices and is (more than all preceding divine scriptures) greatly concerned with their analysis. The Qurân guides man to the virtues proper to healthy conscience and accepted by the mind. We are made to hate vice through the Qurânic analysis which shows that conscience and the mind of man are naturally against wrong. It is quite adequate to cite the following holy verses :

(1) *O ye who believe ! fulfil (all) obligations.*

(2) *Help ye one another in righteousness and piety, but help ye not one another in sin and rancour: fear God: for God is strict in punishment.*

(3) Say : *" Come, I will rehearse what God hath (really) prohibited you from" : join not anything as equal with Him; be good to your parents, kill not your children on a plea of want; We provide sustenance for you and for them; — come not nigh to shameful deeds, whether open or secret; take not life, which God hath made sacred, except by way of justice and law : thus does He command you, that ye may learn wisdom.*

(4) *And come not nigh to the orphan's property, except to improve it, until he attains the age of full strength, give measure and weight with (full) justice; — no burden do we place on any soul but that which it can bear; —*

whenever ye speak, speak justly, even if a near relative is concerned; and fulfil the Covenant of God; thus does *He command you, that ye may remember.*

(5) *God command justice, the doing of good and liberality to kith and kin; and He forbids all shameful deeds, and injustice and rebellion: He instructs you, that ye may receive admonition.*

(6) *Fulfil the Covenant of God when ye have entered into it, and break not your oaths after ye have confirmed them; indeed you have made God your surety; for God knoweth all that ye do.*

(7) *Thy Master hath decreed that ye worship none but Him, and that ye be kind to parents. Whether one or both of them attain old age in thy life, say not to them a word of contempt nor repel them, but address them in terms of honour.*

(8) *And, out of kindness, lower to them the wing of humility, and say: " Master ! bestow on them thy Mercy even as they cherished me in childhood."*

(9) *Your Master knoweth best what is in your hearts : if ye do deeds of righteousness, verily He is Most Forgiving to those who turn to Him again (in true penitence).*

(10) *And render to the kindred their due rights, as (also) to those in want, and to the wayfarer; but squander not (your) wealth in the manner of a spendthrift.*

(11) *Verily spendthrifts are brothers of the Evil Ones; and the Evil One is to his Lord (Himself) ungrateful.*

(12) *And even if thou hast to turn away from them in pursuit of the Mercy from thy Lord which thou dost expect, speak to them a word of easy kindness.*

(13) *Make not thy hand tied (like a niggard's) to thy neck, nor stretch it forth to its utmost reach, so that thou become blameworthy and destitute.*

(14) *Verily thy Master does provide sustenance in abundance for whom He pleaseth, and He provideth in a just measure. For He does know and regard all His servants.*

(15) *Kill not your children for fear of want; We shall provide sustenance for them as well as for you. Verily the killing of them is a great sin.*

(16) *Nor come nigh to adultery: for it is a shameful (deed) and an evil, opening the road (to other evils).*

(17) *Nor take life, which God Has made sacred — except for just cause. And if anyone is slain wrongfully, We have given his heir authority (to demand Qisàs, or to forgive): but let him not exceed bounds in the matter of taking life; for he is helped (by the law).*

(18) *Come not nigh to the orphan's property except to improve it until he attains the age of full strength; and fulfil (every) engagement for (every) engagement will be enquired into (on the Day of Reckoning).*

(19) *Give full measure when ye measure, and weigh with a balance that is straight: that is the most fitting and the most advantageous in the final determination.*

(20) *And pursue not that of which thou hast no knowledge: for every act of hearing, or of seeing, or of (feeling in)*

the heart will be enquired into (on the Day of Reckoning).

(21) *Nor walk on the earth with insolence: for thou canst not rend the earth asunder, nor reach the mountains in height.*

(22) *Of all such things the evil is hateful in the sight of thy Lord.*

(23) *These are among the (precepts of) wisdom, which thy Master Has revealed to thee. Take not, with God, another object of worship, lest thou shouldst be thrown into Hell, blameworthy and rejected.*

(24) *When a (courteous) greeting is offered you, meet it with a greeting still more courteous.*

(25) *O ye who believe ! enter not houses other than your own, until ye have asked permission and saluted those in them : that is best for you, in order that ye may heed (what is seemly).*

(26) *If ye are asked to go back, go back: that makes for greater purity for yourselves; and God knows well all that ye do.*

(27) *" And swell not thy cheek (for pride) at man, nor walk in insolence through the earth; for God loveth not any arrogant boaster.*

(28) *And be moderate in thy pace, lower thy voice, for the harshest of sounds without doubt is the braying of the ass ".*

(29) *O ye who believe ! when you are told to make room in the assemblies, (spread out and) make room: (ample)*

room will God provide for you. And when ye are told to rise up, rise up: God will raise up, to (suitable) ranks (and degrees), those of you who believe and who have been granted (mystic) knowledge. And God is well-acquainted with all ye do.

(30) *And if one of you deposits a thing on trust with another, let the trustee (faithfully) discharge his trust, and let him fear his Lord.*

(31) *God doth command you to render back your trusts to those to whom they are due, and when ye judge between man and man, that ye judge with justice.*

(32) *Nor can goodness and evil be equal. Repel (evil) with what is better; then will he between whom and thee was hatred become as it were thy friend and intimate !*

(33) *Hold to forgiveness; command what is right; but turn away from the ignorant.*

(34) *O ye who believe ! stand out firmly for God, as witnesses to fair dealing, and let not the hatred of others to you make you swerve to wrong and depart from justice. Be just : that is next to Piety; and fear God. For God is well-acquainted with all that ye do.*

(35) *O ye who believe ! betray not the trust of God and the Apostle, nor misappropriate knowingly things entrusted to you.*

These are only some verses, quoted from many "Sùras, but we still have hundreds of their like which order more to follow good in all its forms and to avoid evil in all its types.

They deal, as is apparent, with the virtues of the individual and society, setting the basis of ideal raising and education of man. There are, indeed, certain moral principles which, once adopted by man, would make an angel of him, coming as it were to lead people on the path of right and happiness in this our world and the next.

It is true that all preceding heavenly scriptures have tackled this point, and all social and moral philosophies have been concerned with it, but, nevertheless, the Qurân in dealing with it, has been more profound and extensive. We will find so many traditions of the prophet which tell us about good and evil in the full sense of the terms.

The only decisive factor which determines the human side in man is his mind. Man can only attain perfection through the proper use of its power. Islam, recognizing the right place of this human power, has guided man to the correct use of this faculty. God, in the Holy Qurân, referred in so many verses to the mind of man, to human reasoning and so forth :

"Thus does God make clear His signs to you; in order that ye may understand".

...in this, is a message of rememberance to men of understanding.

" And We have sent down unto thee (also) the Message; that thou mayest explain clearly to men what is sent for them, and that they may give thought".

" Do they not travel through the land, so that their hearts (and minds) may thus learn wisdom ? "

We find also so many verses which attack the blind imitation of the forefathers, because in so doing one does not

depend on his individual reasoning. One must seek evidence for any conviction handed over to him from the older generation. Among these verses are :

(1) *When it is said to them : " Follow what God hath revealed " : they say: " Nay ! we shall follow the ways of our fathers" even though their fathers were void of wisdom and guidance !*

(2) *When it is said to them : " Come to what God hath revealed; come to the Apostle"; they say " Enough for us are the ways we found our fathers following." What ! even though their fathers were void of knowledge and guidance ?*

(3) *They said : " Hast thou come to us to turn us away from the ways we found our fathers following ? "*

(4) *Just in the same way, whenever We sent a Warner before thee to any people, the wealthy ones among them said : " We found our fathers following a certain religion, and we will certainly follow in their footsteps." He said : " What ! even if I brought you better guidance than which ye found your fathers following ? " They said : " For us, we deny that ye (prophets) are sent (on a mission at all). "*

We find, as a further evidence for Islam's glorification of human reasoning, that all scholars, with very few exceptions, are of the opinion that once one finds a contradiction between an idea maintained by correct reasoning and any of the divine texts, the former should be accepted. We should then admit that we do not understand that given text (if it is really a divine text) that it is beyond our human understanding and that God's intention was not to

be revealed to us. Or, if possible, we could interpret it, within the recognized laws of the language, so that it would conform to the idea reached by correct reasoning. What a glorification of mind ! Islam has paved the way for human understanding to work, and removed all possible obstacles that may hinder its work.

It is only natural then that the dignity of man, through this glorification of reasoning, has acquired its right position. Between Man and God there are no intermediaries whatsoever, no saints or clergymen. People are all alike (none detested by God and none preferred but for piety, deeper understanding of the Holy Qurân and the "Sunna" of his prophet, higher scientific achievement beneficial to one's fellow humans and also because of the good deeds which set the example to be followed by others).

We do not find, therefore, a religious authority to be ultimately obeyed. The prophet of God explicitly states that "You must not obey an order which makes you disobey God". The first Calif ABU BAKR told his people :

" You should obey me so long as I obey God; but if not, you are free to disobey me ".

Islam, thus, has hewed down the religious authority of priests and clergymen. Islam does not recognize any religious authority among men. All practice of priesthood, known in old religions, has been rejected by Islam. The only remaining authority is the Holy Qurân and the "Sunna" of God's prophet. Man has thus gained dignity, complete freedom of thought and action, and so is entirely responsible for what he does.

CHAPTER TWO

SOCIAL REFORM

The smallest social unit is the family. Society, in the widest sense, may comprise the whole world; but, still, the family is the first unit to be considered. Islam, for this reason, provided every possible guarantee which would secure happiness to this unit, and so secure the happiness of the whole society. This can be achieved only if every member of this unit knows his rights and duties and properly practises them.

For this reason, God ordered us to marry. Islam, with all its traditions, forbids any man-woman relation unless practised in this lawful form. We can feel the importance of family life, and the need for it, if we merely understand this verse, in the sura of Rùm :

" *And among His Signs is this, that He created for you mates from among yourselves, that ye may dwell in tranquillity with them, and He has put love and mercy between your (hearts): verily in that are Signs for those who reflect*".

Marriage, therefore, is a bond which connects one soul to another. A husband can find happiness and solace with his wife, is consoled and relieved from the troubles of his work only when she shares his actual life with him, cherish-

ing his hopes and encouraging him to face life more sternly. And only thus can life be a paradise for both.

To secure harmony between husband and wife, God has stated the rights and duties of each. The husband has to work outside the house to provide his family with the necessary requirements of life; while the wife is merely supposed to stay at home to look after her household affairs and bring up the children. A wife, therefore, will not be obliged to debase herself in an outside job. Children have to obey their parents and look after them later when they are old and in need of care.

God, merciful and compassionate as He is, made it an inherent right of the parents to be looked after by their children. He states more than once the duties of children towards their parents and stresses the rights of the parents in the same verses where his worship is stated and the significance of this is quite apparent.

One of these verses is that in Sùra of Israâ :

" Thy Lord hath decreed that ye worship but Him, and that ye be kind to parents whether one or both of them attain old age in thy life, say not to them a word of contempt, nor repel them, but address them in terms of honour And, out of kindness, lower to them the wing of humility, and say: 'My Lord ! bestow on them thy Mercy even as they cherished me in childhood.' "

And another occurs in Sùra of Loquman

"And We have enjoined on man (to be good) to his parents in travail; upon travail did his mother bear him, and in years twain was his weaning : (hear the command

'Show gratitude to Me and to thy parents : to Me is (thy final) goal.' "

A family is not merely composed of parents and children. The term includes all relatives such as grandfather, grandmother, uncles, aunts, brethren, cousins, nephews and so on. Hence, Islam ordered the rich in a given family to support their poor relatives so that no member of this small social unit would ever suffer and consequently no member of the whole society would be subject to the pains of poverty.

It may be relevant to mention here that during my stay in France, I lived with a family whose maid-servant seemed to me to be of good family and did in fact arouse my curiosity. I, therefore, asked the lady of the house," Why should this lady debase herself in this way ? Has she not any relative who can support her and put an end to her degrading job ? " The answer was that the lady had an extremely rich uncle, but who still did not look after her. When I told her that the lady could sue him to get financial support, she was greatly surprised and told me that the law did not provide for this at all.

When she knew that Islam states that such an uncle was legally obliged to support his poor relative, she commented that this blessing of Islam is really needed to put an end to the debasement of the fair sex in outdoor jobs. Were they to adopt Islam the lady, whosoever she was, would not go out and work for a penny that costs her a great deal in dignity and honour.

Sometimes matrimonial life is threatened and the so-called connubial bliss is blown up. Will the husband and wife still go on without divorce ? No, definitely. The law

of Islam entitles them to divorce in case of the impossibility of reconciliation. Divorce, nevertheless, is considered by God to be the most odious lawful act, as has been reported by God's prophet. God advises us first to try a reconciliation, in such verses as in the Sùra of "Nissa" :

" If ye fear a breach between them twain, appoint (two) arbiters, one from his family, and the other from hers; if they wish for peace, God will cause their reconciliation; for God hath full knowledge, and is acquainted with all things".

If this attempt proves a failure, divorce becomes inevitable. It is for the good of both to separate, as stated by God in the same sura of Nissa :

" But if they disagree (and must part), God will provide abundance for all from His all-reaching bounty ".

Out of all this, we can conclude that divorce, only lawful in Islam, is good for both husband and wife if their conjugal life proves bad. It, moreover, contributes more to the dignity of a wife to leave her husband in case of discord than to be still imposed upon him.

The post-divorce conditions of husband and wife are perfectly treated in the Holy Qurân. All the rules to be followed are wisely set, concerning the alimony of the divorced wife, her children and how they should be brought up and so on.

If we go on to consider how Islam dealt with society in general in a given country or nation we still find rules which secure happiness, prosperity and well-being.

Islam sets firm foundations for society; mercy, love and cooperation. Society also depends on equality of rights and duties, and the coordination of efforts for public and private good.

It is adequate to reflect on this verse which comes in the Sùra of AL HUGURAT :

" *The Believers are but a single Brotherhood.* "

In order to understand what is meant by a firm foundation let us also consider these traditions of the Prophet : "*The true believers, in love and compassion, look like a living body; if any organ is sick, the rest of the body will suffer as well the pains of fever and insomnia*", and " *Do not let hatred, envy or conspiracy reign among you, but be true brethren and kinsmen* " and " *no one's belief is perfect until he is altruistic, wishing for others the good wished for himself* ", and " *have mercy on people on earth so that God may have mercy on you* ".

This element of mercy, which must be engendered in the souls of the faithful by Islam, is not confined to human beings. It goes far more deeply to cover animals and so on. God's prophet said, " *A woman was condemned to the infernal fires because she shut a cat in a room. She neither offered any food to it nor left it free to seek its own victuals*".

It is reported by Imam El Bukhary and Imam Muslem that the prophet of God once said, "*A thirsty bedouin was on his way through the desert when he found a well and could get a mouthful of water to quench his thirst. Beside the well there was a cowering exhausted dog. It was apparent to the bedouin that the dog was also thirsty, so he endeavoured to get him some water and could at last quench his thrist too.*

For so doing the dog thanked him and prayed to God for him, so that he was greatly rewarded by God and granted forgiveness" When asked, the prophet of God stated that man is to be rewarded for helping any living being.

Since Islam urges man to be kind to animals, it is no wonder that man must be more kind and tolerant towards his fellow human beings, for the human race is all related to Adam, God's peace be upon him, and is all created by God whose mercy covers all.

We cannot in this essay discuss all the principles upon which society is based in Islam, or to deal with all the laws which secure its virtuous qualities and healthy atmosphere We shall, therefore, confine our talk to three main points, still questionable in the West, and even a source of trouble which has had bad effects on world affairs, in general These points are concerned with government, economy and guarding society against oppression in all its forms.

(a) As for the first point we find that Islam states that government should be based on two principles : consultation and responsibility A ruler is not to be despotic and nobody is allowed to shun responsibility even if it be the Caliph or the Imam himself

The Prophet of God, His peace be upon him, used, as is universally known, to consult the wise and intelligent in all public affairs, in case there was no evidence in the Qurân. This consultation is urged by the holy Qurân in many verses; in the Sura of Al-Emran :

" *And consult them in affairs (of moment)* ".

And in the Sura of Shura, the faithful are described as " *deciding their affairs by mutual consultation.* "

A government based on these two principles must admit of no despotic tendencies whatever, and necessitates that people should obey the governors so long as they do not deviate from the path of good. It, moreover, and this is highly important, lays a responsibility on all people that they should guide their government in case of deviation from the right path and must rectify or, at least , attempt to rectify, any wrong committed by the rulers.

Evidence in Islamic history, in its early days of laying the foundations and establishing rights and duties, are numerous. It is quite adequate for our purpose to cite the follownig instances :

It is reported by Imam Ahmed Ibn Hanbal and others that the prophet of God said : " *Every Muslim must obey the orders of the ruler, whether to his liking or not, so long as the order concur with the heavenly decrees. If the orders tend to contradict the laws of God he is not to obey.* " In another tradition he says :

" *You have to obey your governor, even though he be an Ethiopian negro, so long as he follows the rules of Islam.* "

The first Caliph, Abu Bakr, gave a speech on the day he was appointed, which started as follows : " My people, I have been chosen as Caliph though I am not the best person among you. If I prove good, help me. If I do anything wrong you have to correct it for me... Obey me so long as I obey God and the principle of his prophet; if not, you are free to disobey me ".

The second Caliph, Omar Ibn El Khattab, said to his people : " You should rectify whatever wrong I may fall into. " A bedouin commented, saying, "If you fall into

wrong we shall rectify it using our swords." Omar thanked God, saying "I should then thank God for having among the Muslims a man ready to rectify the wrongs of Omar, using his sword".

Once government is based on these sound foundations, justice will prevail, which is the ultimate target of Islam. It is, as a matter of fact, an ideal principle of justice, never to be subject to any external influences such as justice against enemies, or being in favour of the relatives or in fear of authority.

In the Sùra of NISSA, (verse 135) God say :

"O ye who believe ! Stand out firmly for justice, as witnesses to God, even as against yourselves, or your parents, or your kin, and whether it be (against) rich or poor: for God can best protect both. Follow not the lusts (of your hearts), lest ye swerve." And in the Sùra of MAIIDA (verse 8) :

"O ye who believe ! Stand out firmly for God, as witnesses to fair dealing, and let not the hatred of others for you make you swerve to wrong and depart from justice. Be just : that is next to piety: and fear God. For God is well acquainted with all that ye do."

In the first verse, we see a direct order to apply the principle of justice and equality among all, irrespective of any ulterior consideration, while in the second the point is developed through the addition that in considering the testimony of witnesses no preference should be given to any of them, and that only thus can justice prevail.

The history of Islam is full of instances in which these principles were applied. This very principle of absolute

justice led very many people who were pagan or who belonged to other religions to adopt Islam.

(b) As for the second point dealing with the economy, we find that Western civilization, and even the lives of Western peoples themselves, are mainly based on economic foundations. They are actually materialistic since their main interests is merely to improve their economic conditions, considering money as the only decisive factor which determines the values of individuals and communities.

This is indeed the reason for the eternal fight between Western peoples. They eat themselves up trying to get possession of economic resources, and hence their motivation in the past to practise a wide-range imperialism in the East and their endeavour at present to keep their colonies.

They thus discarded all the exalted human values and supreme virtues which ought to rule human relations in all communities. They forgot all about the day of doom and resurrection, considering this life on earth to be the only life to be lived.

Islam has an entirely different attitude from this. In fact, God created all the riches of this earth to let us enjoy them if obtained by righteous means.

But it draws our attention to two things; first, that this life is not eternal. Second, that it is not every thing, it is merely a path leading to eternity in the next world. So we have to look forward to the everlasting bliss of paradise and be so good as to work hard for it.

This point is well stressed in many verses of the Qurân. We find, however, other verses which show that material

prosperity and all sorts of profane pleasure may tend at times to sully the purity of one's soul.

We find such verses as :

" *And know ye that your possessions and your progeny are but a trial; and that it is God with whom lies your highest reward ?* " and :

" *Wealth and sons are allurements of the life of this world : but the things that endure, good deeds, are best in the sight of thy Lord, as rewards, and best as (the foundation for) hopes.* " God, omniscient as He is, tells how poor and insignificant this present life is, compared with the eternal bliss of the next world. This is best expressed, and indeed wonderfully illustrated, in these verses (in Sùra of Hadid verse No. 20) ·

" *Know ye (all), that the life of this world is but play and amusement, pomp and multiplying, (in rivalry) among yourselves, riches and children. Here is a similitude: how rain and the growth which it brings forth, delight (the hearts of) the tillers ! Soon it withers; thou wilt see it grow yellow; then it becomes dry and crumbles away. But in the Hereafter is a Penalty severe (for the devotees of wrong) And Forgiveness from God and (His) Good Pleasure (for the devotees of God). And what is the life of this world, but Goods and chattels of deception ?* "

For once man believes firmly in this, and adheres strictly to this conviction he will no more indulge in races for money, and will immediately understand the role of money in our life. Money is not an end in itself, but merely a means towards a loftier end, which is to make life happier of all human beings. It has a social function; and does

perform an important part in our lives, and this is to create cooperation and understanding among men, and not merely to be a source of fighting and trouble.

The Qurân has also pointed out that man is not the sole owner of the earth and its treasures. God is the real owner, but he granted man its possession in order that he might live happily, helping his fellows and following the laws of God. Man has to spend his money lawfully, paying to the poor their due share in his private property and so on :

" *Believe in God and His Apostle, and spend (in charity) out of the (substance) whereof He has made you heirs. For those of you who believe and spend (in charity), for them is a great Reward.* "

The most important element in this question of social integration is to pay to the poor their due share in the property of the rich, i.e. the Zakat. This Zakat is not a sort of almsgiving in the degrading sense of this term. On the contrary, the Zakat is a definite sum of money legally exacted from all rich. It is a recognized right of the poor, as is stated in the Qurân.

The rich have also to help the poor by way of almsgiving and charitable work, as stated in Sûra of AL BAQARA (verse 177) but still the Zakat has to be paid regularly.

The Prophet of God stresses the importance of the poor's claim to the property of the rich, for, as reported by Muslem and Abu Daoud, he says "*Those who may have more more horses and more food than they actually require must give some to those in need.*" He says also, " *A true believer would never be content to see a neighbour of his suffer the pangs of hunger while he himself is satisfied.* "

Only through this financial system, can love prevail amongst people and social integration be maintained. Social balance can therefore be secured, which means equality of rights and duties and equal opportunities for all the work which secures dignity to all.

The government and people are responsible for achieving this end.

(c) Islam, consequently, lays great emphasis on the principles of love and cooperation. These two fundamental rules must govern the actions of men however different they may be in race, colour or tongue. They must not fight each other or suffer oppression in any sense. Since all this seems to be wishful thinking, for man is not originally good, very strict legislation has to be set up in order to guard society against oppression. And hence Islam dealt in detail with the cardinal sins and stated the sort of punishment to be imposed on him who stoops to any of these sins. These punishments are called "Al Hudood" (pl. of "Had" i.e. punishment). (1)

These punishments secure the behaviour, mind and property of man, not to mention the remaining of strict penalties to be imposed on all criminals and sinners. We have, besides this, to know that Islam has also set preventive laws against vice and crime.

This can be achieved through disseminating the principles of good and fighting wrong, in the full sense of these

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(1) These are he «Hudood» of (a) Adultery, (b) Libel, (c) Drinking alcohol, (d) Theft.

two terms, and this work constitutes a major basis of our religion.

The Holy Qurân has dealt extensively with this subject of good and bad, analysing the vicious propensities of man so that we may know what they lead to in this life and in the next world and so avoid the ways of wrong. We shall therefore speak briefly on some of these points.

On the points of disseminating the principles of good and fighting wrong, God orders us to appoint certain persons among the Muslim people who are to devote themselves to carrying out this important task. God says :

" *Let there arise out of you a band of people inviting to all that is good, enjoining what is right.*"

It is reported by Abu Daoud, El Termizy, and by El Nissaii, that the prophet of Allah said : " *Those people who are aware of oppression but do not take serious measures to stop it, all will be punished soon by God*".

That oppression is wrong and so forbidden, that oppressors will be severely punished, especially in the next world, is greatly stressed by God in such verses as :

" *No intimate friend nor intercessor will the wrong-doers have, who could be listened to.* "

The Prophet of God is reported by Muslim in his "Sahih " to have said : " *God says : 'My worshippers ! Oppression is forbidden in Heaven as on earth. Do not do injustice to any of your human brethren'.* " In another tradition God's Prophet says : " *An oppressor is given time and op-*

portunity to prosper and then, once taken, he will be condemned to eternal punishment," and then he read the holy verse :

" Such is the chastisement of thy Lord when He chastises communities in the midst of their wrong · grievous, indeed and severe is His chastisement. "

Society can only attain its ideal form if every member is absolutely honest in following his vocation and aware of his responsibility towards his fellow members. He has to keep this word, not to cheat anybody or to break a promise of any kind. In all this God guides us, as we find apparent in these verses :

" God does command you to render back your Trusts to those to whom they are due. "
and, (at the beginning of the Sùra of El Maiida) :

" O ye who believe ! Fulfil (all) obligations."
and (in the Sùra of Israa, verse 34) :

" And fulfil (every) engagement, for (every) engagement will be enquired into (on the Day of Reckoning). "

The Prophet of God, God's peace be upon him, describes hypocrites as *" those who are not honest, and always break their promise"* He says elsewhere, *" The treacherous are distinguished on the day of doom by a certain banner by which one can easily recognize a traitor."*

Cheating in trade is another instance of treachery and dishonesty. The Prophet, therefore, strictly forbids it. He was once passing through a market (as reported by Abu Hu-

raira through Muslim), when he saw a person exposing some food (composed of dates) for sale. When he examined it he found that a part of it was wet and so rotten. He questioned the man as to the cause of this. Then he knew that rain had spoilt it, he ordered the man to expose the rotten part so that people could be sure about the real state of the food. *" He who cheats us, does not belong to Islam,"* said the Prophet at length.

Some may contend, out of ignorance or for the sake of argument, that civil laws are apt to secure social safety and guard society against oppression in all its forms, and so they ask : " What is the use of Islamic legislation ? " In so saying, these people ignore, consciously or not, certain psychological facts which characterize the laws of God, and differentiate civil laws from heavenly legislation.

A civil law, in any country, is a man-made law, and so fallible. It sometimes tends to oppression, since man does not have that comprehensive view of human life which would have made his laws applicable in all times and in all communities. Civil laws do not spring from the inner psychology of man. They are external laws and so limited in effect, and can easily be broken, once the individual is sure to avoid punishment.

The laws of God, which are stated by Islam in a perfect form, conform to the natural propensities of man and so are fundamentally acceptable by the human race. God is, moreover, infallible. He entitles man to practise his inherent and inalienable rights, guiding him always to right and warning him against wrong.

The law of God, in its comprehensiveness, is not confined to profane rewards or penalties. It links man on earth to his eternal life in the next world, and thus he is not cut off from the sources of spiritual power. Man, in obeying the law of God, is merely obeying the infallible law of his human nature and is made to feel the significance of his endeavour on earth since it will lead ultimately to eternal bliss in Heaven.

CHAPTER THREE

WORLD PEACE

Islam is not a religion of one people or merely of one age. It is a religion of all people at all times, a religion for all who seek right and believe in it. Evidence has been given from the Qurân, that this is ultimately true.

It is only natural, then, that Islam should be greatly concerned with world peace at all times. This can be seen in the following :

(a) We are not supposed to be enemies to the non-Muslim peoples merely because we are different in religion. On the contrary, we have to love them and make peace with them so long as they prove to be friendly. If, however, we are attacked, retaliation will be inevitable.

In the Sùra of Al Baqara (V. 190) God says :

" *Fight in the Cause of God those who fight but do not transgress limits; for God loveth not transgressors.*" And (in Verse 194, of the same Sura) :

" *If, then, any one transgresses the prohibition against you, transgress ye likewise against him. But fear God, and know that God is with those who restrain themselves.* "

In the Sùra of El Mometahina (Verse 8) God says : " *God forbids you not, with regard to those who fight you not for (your) Faith nor drive you out of your homes,*

from dealing kindly and justly with them, for God loveth those who are just. God only forbids you, with regard to those who fight you for (your) Faith, and drive you out of your homes, and support (other) in driving you out, from turning to them (for friendship and protection). It is such (as turn to them in these circumstances), that do wrong."

(b) To love those who are different in religion and yet live among Muslims necessitates positive steps such as looking after the poor, and providing those who are unable to work with financial aid. Omar Ibn El Khattab stated that those who cannot pay the tribute must be exempted; that each must get from the government a regular payment sufficient to maintain himself and his family.

This legislation arose from what happened one day during the rule of Omar. He encountered a blind beggar and was sorry for him. When he investigated his case he knew that he was an old Jew driven by extreme poverty to beg from people. He immediately ordered the person responsible for The Public Treasury to exempt the blind Jew from the tribute and to provide him with a monthly payment. He said to him "Look after the old man and act similarly in all like cases. In later life, every man has a claim to the public treasury just as he contributes to it in his youth".

(a) Islam, moreover, orders us, for the sake of peaceful coexistence among the peoples of the whole world, to treat non-Muslims well, to forgive their wrongs and to be as human, in our behaviour, to them as we are to the holders of our own religion.

It is adequate here to cite this holy verse (The Sura of Al Ancabute Verse 46) :

" And dispute ye not with the People of the Book, except with means better (than mere disputation), unless it be with those of them who inflict wrong (and injury); but say, We believe in the Revelation which has come down to us and in that which came down to you; Our God and your God is One, and it is to Him we bow (in Islam)".

We have also to consider the holy order given to the Prophet of God, (in the Sura of Al Gathia verse 14):

" Tell those who believe, to forgive those who do not look forward to the Days of God: it is for Him to recompense (for good or ill) each People according to what it has earned."

Al Bukhary in his Sahih tells us an incident which bears largely on this question :

Gaber Ibn Abdullah said that once some Muslims were sitting with the Prophet when a funeral passed before them. He, immediately stood up and they followed. When told that it was a Jew who had died, the Prophet of Allah said : *" Is it not a human soul ? If you ever see a funeral, stand up "*.

This brief phrase, though highly significant, "Is it not a human soul ? " tells us very much about the principle of equality of all people regardless of their beliefs, race and so on. It is the toleration distinctive of Islam taken in its right form. It is true that some Muslims, on the long road of history, were narrow-minded or fanatical, but still they were as far from the real spirit of Islam as some are nowadays.

(d) World peace can be achieved if every country that keeps into word and fulfils its promises. Modern history, in whose turbulent current we live, validates this fact.

It is, therefore, enough to point out that imperialism could only find its path to the East when the Great powers perjured their promises to the small countries. What makes anxiety the dominant mood of the world today is the breach of promises given by the international institutions, such as the league of Nations in the past and the United Nations Organization at present, to small countries. Because of this, we find that all the powerful are braggarts, and all, the weak are fettered, while the world as a whole is plighted with a feverish race for the multiplication of destinctive weapons.

Islam, as we all know, is against this mad race. To live in peace, love and cooperation is one lofty end of Islam's. It necessitates that promises, treaties and all kinds of agreements should be kept valid even in case of war between the Muslim people and any other nation, and even if the breach of promise seems in the beginning to be in favour of the Muslims. To keep one's word, therefore, is the principal basis on which international relationships between the Muslims and non-Muslims depend.

We are going now to review some of the Qurân's contributions to this question, with a rather hasty glimpse at the early history of Islam when these principles were strictly applied between the Muslims and other nations. The instructions of the Qurân have made it clear that the love of peace is a real basis of the Islamic and Arabic society.

In the Sura of Al Nahl (verses 91, 92) God says :

"*Lost one party should be more numerous than another*". For it is for their own benefit that the countries of this modern world break their promises. Yet God strongly recommends us not to use this as a pretext for a breach of

promise, because this destroys our moral integrity and spiritual principles.

In the Sura of Tawba (verse 4) we find that God, in His infinite wisdom and omniscience, says that all disbelievers are destined to terrible agonies in hell".

" But the treaties are not dissolved with those pagans with whom ye have entered into alliance and who have not subsequently failed you in aught, nor aided anyone against you. So fulfil your engagements with them to the end of their term : for God loveth the righteous".

For though the disbelievers were at war with the Prophet and the Muslims, we have to keep the promises we made to them so long as they keep them, and so long as they do not help other enemies to fight us.

It is even more than that, for although Muslims are required to join forces against the enemy and deal blows as one body, we have to abstain from helping a group of Muslims in their war against a country of disbelievers with whom we may have had a sort of a peace-treaty, or a non-aggression agreement.

This is explicitly stated by God in verse 72, Sura of Anfal :

" Those who believed, and adopted exile, and fought for the Faith, with their property and their persons, in the cause of God, as well as those who gave (them) asylum and aid, — these are (all) friends and protectors, one of another. As to those who believed but came not into exile, ye owe no duty of potection to them until they come into exile; but if they seek your aid in religion, it is your duty to help them,

except against a people with whom ye have a treaty of mutual alliance. And (remember) God seeth all that ye do.

Only thus, have Islamic societies, following the instructions and injunctions of the Qurân, achieved so many peaks in keeping their promises, hardly achieved by other societies past and present.

History, as a matter of fact, provides us with very many cases when these principles were applied.

Hozaifa Ibn Al Yamani tells us that he did not fight with the Muslims in the battle of Badr, because some of the disbelievers of the Quraish tribe caught him with a fellow of his on their way to the Prophet and he had made a promise with them not to fight them, and not to join the Muslim forces. When the Prophet of Allâh knew of the promise he said : *Do not fight, keep your promise, and God will help us.*

Before the signing of the Hudaibeya armistice, Sohail Ibn Amr was delegated by the disbelievers of the Quraish tribe to negotiate with the Prophet of God. While he was writing the text of the treaty which stipulated that any of the contracting parties was not allowed to receive as refugee a person belonging to the other, the son of Sohail called Abu Gandal came to the Prophet and announced himself as a Muslim. His father seized him firmly and told the Prophet that the treaty, though not yet signed, was valid and ought to be put into effect. The Prophet approved. It was inevitable to let the new Muslim return to his disbelieving community ! It was the treaty though unsigned yet, and the holy verse :

" But if they seek your aid in religion, it is your duty to help them except against a people with whom ye have a treaty of mutual alliance. Which necessitated that step. "

The successors of Muhammad, God's peace be upon him, followed this ideal example. When the Persian chief called " Al Hurmozan " was captured after long fighting against the Muslim army, Omar Ibn El Khattab, the Caliph then, guaranteeing his security, asked him to confess everything When he admitted all the atrocities committed against the Muslim captures; Omar sentenced him to death. But, reminded that he had guaranteed his security, he set him free. Taken by the prodigality of Omar's toleration and the promise which had been kept, Al Hurmozan declared himself a Muslim, and so was granted his due share in the gains of the Muslim people This exemplary behaviour was typical of Omar. In a letter of Saad Ibn Abi Wakkas, the leader of the Muslim troops in Persia, Omar says " If ever a sign is given by you to the enemy and considered by them to be a sign of peace, you have to take it as such and act accordingly ".

Another instance of Omar's ideal behaviour is that of the Persian Castle. The Muslim troops besieged a Persian castle and were about to seize it, when a slave warrior in the Muslim troops wrote to them guaranteeing their security. When the Muslim leader knew of this he refused to recognize that security. The Persians insisted that they had been lawfully granted a promise of security, since they could not distinguish the slave from the free. A letter was sent to Omar, the Caliph, asking his counsel. His answer stated that " A Muslim slave has an authority to speak for his people an authority as valid as that of any other Muslim. The security granted to the persians must, therefore, be put into effect ".

It is reported elsewhere that a message was sent to Abu Obaida, the leader of the army, that, since God highly estim-

ates fulfilment of one's promises, the Muslim troops have to withdraw and leave the Persians alone ".

In fulfilling the promise given by a slave, Omar was merely applying the tradition of the Prophet that. " *All Muslims are equal, that the meanest can speak for them* ". An absolute equality is secured by Islam, regardless of any racial, colour or class differences.

Omar wanted also to give us an example of an individual being responsible for his actions; for once he is aware that he represents the will of this nation he will be careful not to do wrong which would then blemish the whole community. Omar points out that what is significant to Islam is the application of lofty principles, not their outward form.

What took place between the people of Samarakand and Omar Ibn Abdul Aziz, the far famed caliph, who was renowed for his absolute justice, is another instance of Islam's sanction of the principle of fulfilling promises given. They complained to him that Kotaiba Ibn Muslim, the leader of the army which had invaded Samarkand, had not been fair in the battles in which he had engaged with them because they said he had made use of treachery and vile conspiracies The accusation was considered by Gomaia Ibn Hader, the chief judge then, and his verdict was twofold. It gave the army of Samarkand a new opportunity to fight a fair battle; if defeated they would have no right to complain. The alternative was an agreement which would satisfy the contending parties and put an end to their quarrel.

Facing this unprecedented judgement, the people of Samarkand preferred reconciliation and made peace with the Muslim governors. Omar Ibn Abdul Aziz was motivat-

ed, in this step, by his love of justice and his abhorrence of treachery' ?

(e) In spite of all these guarantees against it, war sometimes becomes inevitable. Peace is not at times possible, for the security of Islamic progress may necessitate war, especially when we have to defend our independence against foreign aggression. The law of Islam tells us exactly what to do in order to reduce the evils of war to the minimum. There are certain rules which if followed, can make of war a good remedy for the evils of modern life.

The early Muslim people — inspired by the lofty ideals set by the Prophet of Islam; God's peace be upon him, were aware of this double nature of war. It can, therefore, be lawful when defensive. To defend Islam, national dignity, or the welfare of the country, one has to fight to the death; while it is strictly forbidden by the law of God to attack the peaceful, or to destroy the country of the enemy for the sole purpose of destroying it. This is, as a matter of fact, different from what the Jews are ordered to do by their old testament in its present form.

Soliman Ibn Barida tells us that his father reported that the prophet of Allah used to advise his army before launching into battle to be pious, and used to say to them, " *Fight for the cause of God, in God's name. Kill the disbelievers in God. Do not massacre the enemy, do not betray them, nor kill the defenceless such as women and children. Do not mutilate the bodies of the dead* ".

Nafei tells us that Abdullah Ibn Omar reported that when the Prophet of God found on the battle-field a woman slain by the Muslims, he ordered his men not to kill women

and sent a messenger to Khalid Ibn El Walid, the leader of an army at that time, ordering him not to kill children, workers or women.

The Caliphs followed the example of the great Prophet Abu Bakr Al Saddiq sent a message to Osama, the leader of the Muslim army fighting in Syria at that time, saying "Do not be treacherous; do not massacre, do not kill the old, women or children. Do not mutilate the bodies of the dead. Do not cut down palm trees or any other fruit bearing trees Do not kill a sheep, a cow or a camel but for your food. You will pass by certain people who are devoted to their monast ries (i.e. Monks); leave them in Peace.

Omar Ibn Al Khattab did almost the same. In one of his letters he says : "Do not massacre; do not betray, Neither kill children nor peasants". He used always to order the leaders of Muslim armies; "Do not kill the old, women or children. Never attack any one of them even if they attack you in the battlefield".

This is indeed the way of Islam ! How different is the way of modern civilization which prides itself on large-scale destruction of whole cities indeed, with thousands of children, women, and old men who are defenceless, helpless and cannot join the war !

What about the captives taken in war ? What is the view of Islam in this respect ? It is just good treatment on a lofty human level. For there is a choice between two solutions as regards the release of captives either they are to be released for nothing i.e. by merely setting them free; or; if possible, a ransom is to be paid for each capture. A holy verse states :

" Therefore, when ye meet the Unbelievers (in fight), smite at their necks; at length, when ye have thoroughly subdued them; bind a bond firmly (on them); thereafter (is the time for) either generosity of ransom: until the war lays down its burdens ". Because of this, many scholars of Islamic law, and so many jurists (such as Ataa, Al Hasan and Ibn Omar) are not for killing captives. When asked about killing of captives, Ataa expressed his abhorrence of this and preferred either of the above mentioned solutions. Al Hasan stated that captives should be treated like those in the battle of Badr by the first Muslim army led by the Prophet of God Himself, i.e. either to be granted freedom, or to be exchanged for Muslim captives.

Only in case of absolute necessity should a captive be killed e.g. if he commits a grave crime. But these cases, nevertheless ,are very rare; they constitute the exception which confirms the rule. For although the Prophet of God killed certain captives, he strongly advised us setting the example himself that captives should be very well treated.

A striking example of this is that of Thomama Ibn Athal, When he was captured by the Muslims, the Prophet of God ordered that he should be treated well, and told his guard to offer him the best food possible. Milk was offered to him, morning and evening, from the private she-camel of the Prophet. When the Prophet asked him to adopt Islam, he refused. He proposed to offer to the Prophet the required ransom to be set free. The Prophet exempted him from the ransom and set him free. Feeling how indulgent and tolerant, and how based on lofty principle Islam was, he declared himself a Muslim.

How different was the treatment of captives in Europe during the second world war ! witnessed myself in 1945 and

the following years the kind of treatment France practised with German captives.

The French used to treat their captives with the utmost humiliation known to man. They engaged them in the most degrading jobs and used to torture them and commit them to the cruellest forced labour on earth. It was considered as treachery to talk to a German captive as man speaks to man.

In Germany of 1946 the same atrocities were committed by the Americans, and most probably by all occupiers of Germany.

It is a major principle of Islam to live at peace with the people of the world and to fight to the death in case war becomes necessary. There is a famous line of ancient Arabic poetry which expresses the same idea :

" I do not hope for war, so long as I am not forced to fight, but once I engage the enemy in battle I fight to the death ". It is reported also that the Prophet of God and his army had been waiting for the arrival of the troops of th enemy until nightfall, when the Prophet realized that the enemy had withdrawn. He therefore said to the Muslim soldiers " *O people! Do not wish or hope to meet the enemy, and seek your safety. But if you once meet your enemies, fight to the death and remember- Under the shadows of your swords there is God's Paradise* ".

In the Holy Qurân, we find this verse (the Sura of Anfal verse 61) :

" *But if the enemy incline towards peace, do thou (also) incline towards peace, and trust in God for He is the One that heareth and knoweth (all things).* "

For God does indeed order us to tend to be peaceful so long as the enemies are peaceful, but, nevertheless, we have to be certain that peace will not detract from the value of the lofty principles to which we adhere, that it shall injure neither our dignity nor our religion.

(f) The effect of this policy, and the application of Islamic principles in case of war or in peace-time can be traced in very many cases.

Very many people who belong to paganism or to non-Islamic countries chose, quite willingly, to adopt Islam when they saw how good and how lofty its principles were. They were driven to take that step by the good example which the Muslim people had given at all times and their good reputation. So many countries of non-Arabic races adopted Islam because of these principles and so the tide of Islam extended in the past to over a great part of the world map and to convert millions to Islam.

This effect is also reflected in the writings of very many western thinkers who favoured Islam, and, moreover, in the writings of christian preachers who admitted the excellence of Islam as a religion of lofty ideals. (1)

We remember Michael the Great, (the Jacobean patriarch of Antikia) who stated in the latter half of the 12th. century A.D. that Islam is the finger of God guiding the Muslim army on its way of conquest; that God has sent the grand sons of Ismail from the Arab peninsula to rid them of the Roman rule which put them under infinite agony.

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(1) Sir Thomas Arnold, «The call of Islam or preaching Islam»

When the Muslim army approached the Jordan Valley, under the leadership of Abu Obaida, its Christian natives sent to him saying, " O Muslims. You are nearer to our hearts than the Romans, though they are Christians. You are more faithful, more indulgent, more kind, just in judgement and you are better, certainly, as governors ".

It is therefore quite easy to cite such testimonies in favour of Islam, and all from foreigners in religion and race. We are not here to cite so many, the only point we want to stress is how good are the principles of Islam and how lofty are its ideals. We merely, lack their right application to our life.

CONCLUSION

Only, now, have we come to know what the world was like when adhering to religion, when Islam led it on the way of good and prosperity. We have also come to know the reason behind all modern evil, and the spirit of materialism which sweeps the world of today; it is the lack of adhesion to a lofty religious creed.

We have also learned much about the value of Islam ! that it determines the relations between man and God as it does the relation between man and man; that it applies to lif in this world as it does to eternal life in Heaven; that it aims at the proper education of individuals and the call for world peace, so that human societies can be governed by fraternity, love and cooperation for the public good.

We still know that God tells us in his Great Book :

" *Verily, never will God change the conditions of a people until they change it themselves (with their own souls)*". and :-

" *O ye who believe ! If ye will aid (the cause of) God, He will aid you, and plant your feet firmly*".
which are laws of God, never subject to change.

Because of all that, the United Arab Republic is burdened with a great responsibility, of representing the Islamic World, of exporting to the west the great belief of Islam in its correct form which comprises the firm ethical basis of our

religion, its ideal human principles and the superb Islamic law.

Our Republic has also to import the best achievements of the west in the fields of industry, thought and discoveries.

We have to realize that no glory can be restored except through religion. We have to apply Islam strictly in all aspects of our life and to disseminate its principles among the free African countries, guiding them to the light of Islam, after long being misled and exploited by European colonization.

We have, furthermore, to fight paganism and vice which squeeze their ways into the filthy atmosphere of cheap literature and the films which help create vicious inclinations in the hearts of men. We have to fight desperately these destructive means which undermine religion, morality, healthy traditions and lofty ideals.

We have also to understand Islam correctly and convey our correct interpretation to other Islamic countries so that they may follow its principles with no deviation. As a general rule, we have to set the example ourselves so that others can see it alive in our daily life.

May God Guide us to the right path of Islam. May God strengthen our moral integrity and support us with a divine spirit !

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